
THE ALTERNATE THE BUREAU

EFFUSIONS

O. F.

FRIENDSHIP

AND

FANCY.

Vol. I.

31

Speedily will be Published,

The Letters that passed between THEO-
DOSIUS and CONSTANTIA, after
she had taken the VEIL.

Now first published from the original Ma-
nuscripts.

*These Letters are yet extant in the Nunnery,
where Constantia resided, and are often read to
the young Religious to inspire them with good Re-
solutions, and Sentiments of Virtue.*

ADDISON.

30c
25
THE
EFFUSIONS
OF
FRIENDSHIP



In several LETTERS to and from
SELECT FRIENDS.

Dr Langhorne

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE
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31

A circular stamp from the British Museum, containing the text "MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM" in a serif font, arranged in three lines.

Y. O. L. I.

1. O'N. O. M.

[illegible]

LETTER I.

To Mr. *****

A New system? A new system? I shall be immortal: I shall be metamorphosed, like Horace, into a swan, or, like Pindar, into an eagle. I foresee tomes upon tomes, that shall be spun from my system in succeeding ages. I forehear the debates of contending philosophers, who shall defend and abuse me three thousand years hence. It will be discovered by one party that I was a bishop, and by the other that I was a cobbler, *and lived in a stall*. I shall be born in London, and in the highlands of Scot-

VOL. I.

B

land;

land ; be on the pillory and in the palace, in prison and in power. I shall be learned and ignorant, pious and prophane, a genius and a dunce.

No more. I will unfold my system, and you shall have the honour of being my first disciple. After long study, and profound researches, I have discovered that all human folly, vanity and affectation, proceed originally from the *Lusus Naturæ* ; that nature is a wag, a whimsical, humorous droll, who diverts herself with making odd creatures of every species, but particularly of the human. For to what can we ascribe the strange qualities and dispositions of some men, but to the *Lusus Naturæ* ?

What is the fop, whose passions center in lace and feathers, but a *Lusus Naturæ* ?
 What is the self-valued philosopher, who re-
 tires

tires to a cell in hopes of being distinguished, but a *Lusus Naturæ*? The cynic who barks at society, and the coxcomb who figures in it, what are they, but *Lusus Naturæ*? The grave scientific fool, who, on the score of his no-learning, despises all that breathe not academic air, is a *Lusus Naturæ*. The mystick, and the metaphysical divine; the *Hutchinsonian*, the sage *Hutchinsonian*, with his hash'd cherub, composed of beef and poultry and venison, which he calls a symbol of three gods; the methodist distributing damnation from his stool in Moorfields, and the cit's conscious wife quaking before his throne; All these are *Lusus Naturæ*. But the procession ends not here. The religious chymist, who toils in the search of occult qualities, has his counter-parts in the chymical critic, the chymical politician, and the chymical philosopher: All the sons of system and conjecture; the *Rousseaus* of sophistry, and the B—ls of pedantic pomp, are *Lusus*

Natura. The whole race of vanity and affectation, the prudish maid and the painted matron, the masculine nymph and the effeminate swain, are the genuine *Lusus Naturæ*. In short, whatever character is out of the bounds of reason or nature, it is a *Lusus Naturæ*.

Do you think this new system is likely to take? If you do, for one pinch of snuff, you shall have the reputation of founding it.

L E T T E R II.

To the same.

O P E N your heart, and make room for mankind. What are modes of faith, or ceremonies of worship, to the obligations of society? What is it to a man's social character whether he eats fish or flesh on certain days, or whether he believes in legends, or laughs at them? Ninety-nine out of a hundred follow the religion of their fathers, without ever enquiring into the merits, either of different professions or of their own; and I am not about to pay you so great a compliment as to suppose that, if you had been born of popish parents, you would now have been a protestant.

I am angry with you; for, why did you look with less charity on Mr. * *, who accompanied me in my last visit, than that gentle-

man deserved? But I will punish you for this foible.—I will come and fill your house with heresy and schism. I intend to bring two papists, a moravian, a methodist, a dipper, and a free-thinker with me; and to convince you that I am in earnest, you shall have a list of my company.

The two papists are *Virgil* and *Tibullus*. The first is a strenuous advocate for purgatory, as appears from the following passage in his writings.

Quin et supremo cum lumine vita relinquit;
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus
omnes

Corporeæ excedunt pestes, penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.
Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumq; malorum
Supplicia expendant—

The second, *Tibullus*, has written in defence of image-worship, and the doctrine of merits.

Thus

Thus clearly he expresses himself on these points.

Nec spes destituat —————

Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris,
Sed vetus in trivio florida ferta lapis.

Such are my papists—and now for the moravian, whose name is *Catullus*. You have read *Rimius*, and are acquainted with the amorous doctrines of that sect. Exactly of a piece with those are the following verses of this *Catullus*. They are addressed to a *sister of love*, and, for the benefit of Mrs. ****, I have translated them from the Latin.

Lesbia, live to love and pleasure,
Careless what the grave may say.
When each moment is a treasure,
Why should lovers lose a day?

Setting suns shall rise in glory,
But when little life is o'er,
There's an end of all the story:
We shall sleep; and wake no more.

Give me then a thousand kisses,
 Twice ten thousand more bestow,
 Till the sum of boundless blisses
 Neither we, nor envy know.

The name of the methodist I shall bring
 with me, is *Plato*, and his discourse turns
 chiefly on reveries and raptures, and lights
 and visions.

My dipper is a fine old Grecian, called *Anacreon*, but such a bigot is he to the perswa-
 sion of dipping that he is eternally talking
 about it.

Come all, my girls, fill high the Bowl,
 And let me drench my fev'rish soul.
 Fill the bowl, boy, fill it high,
 Let me flood my soul with joy.

Addison.

The free-thinker is *Lucretius*, a very noisy,
 sophistical fellow, so you are likely to have a
 blessed time of it.

LET.

LETTER III.

To the same.

APPROVE! I admire your generosity to the unhappy Frenchman. Are we not citizens of the world? Are we not all fellow subjects of the universal monarch? Is not the universe our home? And is not every man a brother? Poor and illiberal is that charity which is confined to any particular nation or society. I own, I never see any of those poor fellows, who are kept here as prisoners of war, without real concern—more, I think, than I should feel either for myself or for my countrymen, were an equal number of us to be in their circumstances, strangers and prisoners. What I am going to tell you will give you an odd idea of me, and may possibly excite your laughter; but I will acknowledge, nevertheless, that not the most affecting or interesting events of history ever

moved me so much as the following simple story, which I read in a news-paper, viz. that a poor French prisoner, who had agreed with the master of a vessel to work, during his passage, for so much a day, was by that master refused his wages when he came on shore. What a roar of ridicule would this raise in the *laudable* society of Antigallicans ! The president would pronounce me frenchified, and Dr. F* * * would preach a sermon to prove it. Sure I am, however, that these sensations are right, because they are natural. Were we not to feel for *the stranger, and the fatherless, and him that hath no helper*, should we not rank with the village-curs, that all join to worry a four-legged stranger, merely because he is a stranger, and has four legs ?

I will not attempt to account for those compassionate sentiments we feel for distress, or that indignation which is excited by the appearance of oppression ; but I will maintain
that

that they are the distinguishing honour of human nature; and what philosopher will be such an enemy to society as to assert the contrary?

Perhaps there is no nation upon earth more distinguished for charity than our own; but I am sorry to observe that our charity is too limited, too partial. We can comprehend cities and towns, and sects and societies, in our scheme of benevolence, but we cannot comprehend mankind. *Hospitibus feri* we have been, and we are. The charity of an Englishman is bounded, like his country, by St. George's chanel, the ocean, and the Tweed. If an Irishman visit us, he is a sharper of some denomination, beyond doubt. If a Scotchman distinguisheth himself among us, he has fled from poverty, disease and dirt, to the elegance and plenty of old England. If a Frenchman comes over, he was weary of
 soup

soup meagre, and his only errand was to devour our roast-beef. Nay, I remember a pamphlet intitled, "Seasonable reflections on the importance of the name of England," and written, if I mistake not, by the above-mentioned Dr. F***. However, let us flatter ourselves that these foibles proceed from the excess of a virtue, and are derived in general from an enthusiastic love of our country. But let us, my friend, make our patriotism, like our religion, rational; nor ever let our hearts be so overstocked with the love of one nation, as to shut out the rest of mankind from our benevolence.

* LET-

LETTER IV.

To Mr. ***

THERE is a happiness in being a fool, if you are insensible of your folly, but to be a fool and to know it, is miserable indeed.—To have just so much light stream through a chink of your soul, as is sufficient to discover the darkness and emptiness of the whole mansion, must be dreadful. How strangely would a man be startled, were he directed by such a ray of light to a full view of his mind ! I believe there are very few who could behold the scene without dissatisfaction : Yet, it were to be wished that we could extend the philosophy of optics so far as to procure a *microscope for the mind* ; but I would have the use of it lie under these restrictions. In the first place, no fool, reputedly such, should

should be permitted to apply it, any more than a sword should be put into the hand of a mad-man ; for the sight might make him miserable, but it would not make him wise. In the next place, I would have it so constructed that it could not be applied to the breast of another, for that would break in pieces the whole chain of society. Men and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, would, in many a family, be at open war. PEACE would entirely desert the court, and she would scarce find refuge in the hamlet : The competitors for wealth and power would be shocked with the execrable wishes and designs of each other ; and the hard-handed peasant would behold his neighbour thirsting for his funeral, and his farm. Nevertheless, there are two characters to whom I would have it applied, viz. the fanatic and the flatterer, and at the same time I would have them sensible
of

of its application. Such ridiculous circumstances would be the most adequate punishment imaginable.

I own there are a few more characters, to which, out of mere curiosity, I could wish to apply the mental microscope. I should like, methinks, to have a peep at the mind of an antiquary. I imagine I should see the twelve *Cæsars* sitting as regularly on his ideas, as they hang in the hall of a history-painter. Perhaps a leg, or an arm of a mummy might be found lurking in a corner, which, as it had been stolen from one of his brethren, he was endeavouring to hide from his conscience. If he were a thorough-bred connoisseur, I should see as many strings stretched across his ideal apartments, as there are in the drying room of a laundress, for the suspension of snails, cockle-shells, worms, feathers and butter-flies ; all which, I ween, would make a goodly sight.

Next

Next to this respectable personage, I would chuse a miser for my speculation; for though it might be easy to guess at the general furniture of his mind, yet it would be curious to see the disposition of that furniture; to mark in what snug repositories, bonds and bills, and deeds of mortgage were laid up; to behold the subtle labyrinths that were pregnant with schemes of cent per cent, and to see *Calculation* sitting on the memory, with a table of compound interest in her hand.

Finally, before I parted with my glass, I would have a glance at your mind, where, I suppose, I should see *Tom Jones*, and *Martini's* concertos, in a distinguished point of view; but if you, in return, should be determined to look into mine, I assure you, that you would be disappointed, for you would scarce see any thing there but yourself.

LET-

L E T T E R S

To the same.

IF I could envy the man I love, I should look with an evil eye upon you; not on account of your late acquisitions, believe me; nor yet that you are five years younger, and four inches taller than myself. All these things I can bear, as becometh a philosopher, and a christian. But that you should have, or pretend to have, so much indifference to the events of human life, provokes me beyond all patience. What! shall a man, who is grown pale over Seneca, and Epictetus, and Antoninus, who has outwatched the weary hour of midnight, in treasuring up aphorisms, and enabling himself to think and talk learnedly *de contemptu mundi*—shall such a

one be out-theoried, out-practised by a boy?
There is no bearing it.

But are you really that indifferent, happy creature you represent yourself to be? It may be so. There is a constitutional, as well as a philosophical indifference, which may properly enough be called *natural* philosophy. I will allow you that, but have too much envy to compliment you with the other.

Listen, however, to one serious truth, which, I find, I have ill-nature enough to tell you. There is no knowing how the heart will bear those misfortunes which have been contemplated, but never felt. We are but little affected by a distant view of evil, and it is good for our peace that it should be so. If your philosophy be merely ideal, my envy is gone; and of that kind I am willing

to flatter myself it is; for what have you met with sufficient to exercise the patience of a philosopher? Have you encountered any of those dreadful distresses that rend the heart, and shake the brain? Has the bosom of love or friendship been chilled in your supporting arms by the hand of death? Have you parted from all that was dear to you, in despair of ever beholding or enjoying the object more? If you have endured these things with indifference, you are a philosopher indeed; but if you have suffered them only in imagination, you have nothing whereof to boast. I have known you almost ever since you entered into this world, and I cannot recollect any thing of which you had cause to complain. Happier than I have been, who hardly ever knew a father, and was called to weep over the grave of an excellent mother, before I had it in my power to give her any testimony of my gratitude, you still live in the sunshine of pa-

rental love, and whenever that is clouded,
I dare say your sensibility will get the better
of your philosophy.

But I find I am growing too serious, though
I begun in the spirit of raillery. I will there-
fore put an end to this scrawl, after I have
told you, that though I frequently wish for
that insensibility, on which the ease of the
heart depends, I never admire those who are
possessed of it. *Equidem invideo non miror*. And
I think I should despise myself, could I walk
the stage of life, like some impassive alder-
man,

With thoughtless eye, and fauntering pace,
And broad felicity of face.

But be you wiser than I am, and cherish
that indifference of which you boast.

LET-

LETTER VI.

To the same.

HOW far a wise man ought to be affected by the opinion of others, is an important question. It concerns the happiness of you and me, and every man; and I thank you for calling upon me to consider it.

I have considered it, and conclude that we ought not to be affected by the opinions of any but wise and good men; and even by theirs, only so far as they evidently coincide with truth and our own conscience.

By this rule we shall reduce our censors to a very small number; for take mankind in the gross, and that two thirds of them will come under the denomination of fools or knaves is beyond a doubt. What opinion either of

these may form of us, it is, certainly, never worth our while to know. A fool cannot form any abstract idea of your character, and a knave will never entertain a just one. The first cannot trace an action to its principle, and the latter will assign to the principle the complexion of his own. To be under any concern, therefore, what sentiments these may entertain of us, would be to partake of the folly of the fool, and to give force to the malignity of the knave.

But if we fall under the censure of wise and good men, we ought to make a severe scrutiny into that part of our conduct, which has drawn upon us their displeasure. Such men never censure without cause, and, though they may be mistaken, yet, even in that case, we should endeavour to justify our conduct as well to them as to ourselves. Happy is the man who has a wise, an honest, and a candid friend,

friend, who will not scruple to point out to him the defect, which lies too near his own eye to be seen. O for such a friend ! How should I rejoice in his correction !

Thus far should every man be affected by censure, as to his moral and social character. And now I know you will expect that I should observe how far an author ought to be concerned by it, as it may affect his literary reputation.

In this case the same rule may be observed as in the other. Consider your critics. Only in this case your censors will be much fewer, for instead of admitting the opinions of a third part of mankind, not one in a thousand should have the least weight with you. Not one in a thousand is capable of judging of the works of imagination at all, and of the finer

efforts of that faculty, such as abstracted poetry, &c. not one in ten thousand can form any adequate idea. How few, then, are those of whose praise the Poet need be ambitious ! How few whose censure he need regard ! For my part, I assure you, I think it sufficient to number among those who are not displeased with my works, a few great names ; and as to the sightless multitude, I would not give a fig for its collective praise.

The thirst of universal applause must be a very troublesome sensation, and yet we very often find it to be the *infirmity of noble minds*, which we see misled by false delicacy and haunted by the chimæra of vulgar opinion. What ridiculous, what romantic actions have been derived from this source ! What fools and madmen, what *Buckinghams* and *Whartons* has it made !

I will

I will not now extend these thoughts, because you will find them sufficiently enlarged upon in the *history of Philip duke of Wharton*, which some materials in my possession may possibly induce me to write.

LET.

LETTER VII.

To the same.

HERE lies the Body of * * * * who
departed from * * * *, Jan. 27, 1760,
Ætat. 24.

O Traveller, when you pass by,
You will depart as well as I.

This is literally true. Since I left the agreeable company at * * * *, I have done nothing but lounge upon any place that would receive half my length, and hatch melancholy thoughts. No wonder therefore that I should strike out an epitaph upon the occasion. It is moreover, you know, an usual thing with poets to write their own epitaphs (an Irishman would have said before they die) —Prior, and Pope, and Gay have done this, and why should not I? It would surely be
imprudent

imprudent for any bard of reputation to trust his executor with this important affair, unless he have more to leave him, than beseemeth bard to leave. For my part, as I expect to die in character, and to leave nothing more in this world than I brought into it, I think, I ought at least, to bequeath a moral to mankind for their good services and good will. I have therefore chosen to convey it in the epitaph as above. Another thing let me whisper to you.—It is ten to one that I shall have no other monument than my works; therefore, if you survive me, I would have you take care that the above couplet be stuck at the end of the last volume. If the bookseller be obstinate, and will not permit this, tell him another shall have the first offer of my letters from the dead to the living, and then, *as sure as I am alive*, he will comply.

It

It were to be wished that all persons had this laudable forecast, with regard to their epitaphs, for it is melancholy to think under what wretched inscriptions many good christians lie. I remember a very loose kind of epitaph, and such a one as might suggest evil thoughts to the traveller, upon the tomb of a very pious lady. It is as followeth:

My life is done, and here I lie,

As from this stone you plainly see:

Live well, that God, when you shall die,

May grant you leave to lie with me.

For my part, I am no less diligent to keep my church-yard clear of offence, than my church; and when my parishioners apply to me for epitaphs on their deceased friends, I always make them as simple as possible, for fear of any thing of that kind. The other day my honest clerk, John Page, came to me
with

with a very funereal aspect, and desired that I would give him a *vairse* or two, to put over his father and mother. I asked him if prose would not do. No; he said, his father had been clerk of the parish nine and forty years, and the clerk of a neighbouring parish had a *vairse* over him, *thof* he had not been half so long a clerk. He then told me the ages of his father and mother, and I gave him the following *vairses*, with which he was well pleased,

Under this stone lies Nicholas Page,
 Who died in the seventy-first year of his age,
 And likewise the body of Nanny his wife,
 Who died in the sixty-third year of her life.

LET.

L E T T E R VIII.

To the same.

D ID you ever observe that *Hopkins* is a better poet than *Sternhold*? I confess that I never knew this, fond as I am of enquiring into poetical merit, till I met with a curious piece of ancient criticism, entitled “ A
“ comparison of the different worthiness of
“ those great poets, *Thomas Sternhold* and *John*
“ *Hopkins*, by a learned clerk.” I believe this is a very scarce tract, and shall therefore transcribe part of it for you. This learned clerk, you will find, is often in the right, though he sometimes mistakes the matter; and, perhaps, you will think him a better critic than *Dryden*, with respect to that famous passage in *Sternhold*, which *Dryden* professedly admired.

“ It

“ It hath full sorely grieved me, says this
antient clerk, that the name of Thomas Stern-
hold should stand before the name of John
Hopkins in the booke of Psalmody; for I pro-
fesse that master Hopkins maketh much plea-
saunter melody.”

Psalm xxx. The followinge verses runne
marvellous smoothe and lightly from the
tounge.

What gain is in my blood, said I,

If death destroy my days?

Can dust declare thy majesty,

Or give thy truth its praise?

Master Hopkins understoode the daintie arte
of making his lines sound like his meaning,
as appeareth from his forcing the voice to
sound forth *ing*, in the worde sounding, as fol-
loweth:

PSALM XXXIII.

Praise ye the Lord with harpe, and sing

To him with psaltery :

With

With ten-string'd instrument soundings.

Praise ye the Lord on high.

There is moreover maney times a daintie
simpleness and eke a tenderness of his expres-
sion, as in Psalm xxxv.

As they had been my brethren dear

I did myselfe behave,

As one that mourneth heavily

Aboute his mother's grave.

He interrogateth with good rhetorique and
cleane language.

PSALM LXXVII.

What, is his goodnesse quite decay'd,

And passed cleane awaye?

Or is his promise now delay'd?

And doth his truth decaye?

He was most covetous of the words *stout*
and strong, which thing testyfyeth his judge-
mente, for these words bee exceedinge poeti-
calle.

PSALM

P S A L M XXVII.

At length I know the Lord's good grace
 Shall make me *strong and stout*,
 My foes to foil and clean disgrace
 That compass me about.

P S A L M LXV.

With strength thou art beset about,
 And compass'd with thy power:
 Thou mak'st the mountains *strong and stout*,
 To stand in every shower.

P S A L M LXXX.

The hills were cover'd round about
 With shade that from it came:
 Also the cedars *strong and stout*,
 With branches of the same.

P S A L M XXXV.

Thou dost defend the weak from them,
 That are bothe *stout and strong*;
 And rid the poor from wicked men,
 That spoil and do them wrong.

But I am mostly delighted with his xlvii
 psalm, where some of the verses are to be ad-
 mired as the beautie of all poetrie.

No, though the sea do rage so sore,
That alle the bankes it spills,
And though it overflowe the shore,
And breake down mightie hills;

Yet one fair flood doth send abroad,
His pleasaunt streams apace,
To glad the citie of our God,
And wash his holy place.

Master Sternhold was not so wise, foras-
much as he was fulle often vulgareley low.

PSALM XLIV.

As sheepe unto the shambles sent,
Even so they deale with us.

And he calleth upon God to get up, as if he
might be the chamberlain, Psalm xlv. Up
Lord! *why sleepest thou? awake!*

And he presenteth the Almighty as if he
were smoking a pipe.

PSALM XVIII.

And from his nostrils went a smoke,
When kindled was his ire.

And

And he maketh him ride upon the backs of
cherubim as if he could not walk.

On cherub and on cherubim
Full royally he rode.

These are the principal criticisms: If you
would see the whole, come to *****

L E T T E R IX.

To the same.

IT has often been matter of amusement to me, to observe the universal prevalence of the passion for distinction. Almost every man is of consequence with himself, and wants to be thought so with others. In whatever light a man's own opinion places himself, he expects that the world should look upon him in the same, and if it should be blind to his merit or to his importance, he is always kind enough to endeavour at least to open its eyes. This passion is undoubtedly to be reckoned amongst the useful gifts of nature, as it was finally intended to make us exert our talents in the pursuit of what is praise-worthy, and to distinguish ourselves in society by serving mankind. But if we cannot conceal our fondness for distinction, or if we claim it upon

*

insignificant

insignificant considerations, or upon a pretence to that consequence which we have not, we shall not only miss the praise we aimed at, but meet the ridicule we would avoid.

These reflections are always renewed, when I meet with a certain gentleman at a coffee-house, to which I resort. As I can think of nothing at present that will entertain you more, I will give you some account of this odd character. He is what you call a limb of the law; but is, I suppose, to use St. Paul's phrase, amongst the *less honourable members*, because he is always bestowing on himself *more abundant honour*. When he comes into the coffee-room in a morning, if there be any company extraordinary, he calls aloud to the waiter to make haste with his coffee, he is going to wait upon my lord Chancellor: If there are but two or three, whom he has frequently met, he is only going to negotiate a bill of exchange, or to buy five hundred

pounds stock for a client in the country. If the mail arrives during his stay, he takes it up, and though he does not understand five words of French, pores upon it with great attention for some time ; if you are so mischievous as to ask him, what news ? which I own I am sometimes tempted to do, he answers that there is nothing extraordinary ; but my lord Chancellor will be gone out for the air. If an election is mentioned, or even a frank, he immediately tells you that he is acquainted with five and forty members of parliament. This was the exact number of his acquaintance in the last session, and it is neither more nor less in the present. He was remarkably pious to the memory of his late majesty, and wore his mourning coat a little beyond the time that was generally observed ; but he whispered me that though this looked well as to his affection for the present family, yet he had a new Pompadour suit at home ; but this is sad weather, says he, and I should have

have been at the Exchequer this morning. I once happened to walk through several streets with him, during which he took some extraordinary methods to shew me his consequence. If we met any person of genteel appearance whom he knew by name, he hoped he was very well, and was his most obedient servant, with a profound bow; after which he hurried away, leaving the man he spoke to in a stare between wonder and recollection. As we walked along, he pointed to the houses of several persons of quality, some of which he should have called upon, but would not give up my company. With one lady of distinction, however, he would leave a message, as business must be minded.—A servant came to the door, whom having whispered that he hoped her ladyship was well, he posted after me.

LETTER X.

From Lady **** in Town, to Lady ****
in the Country.

I pertest I am ashamed to touch my pen about writing to your ladyship, but your ladyship knows that a woman of quality has such flurries, till one has done with the first visits, and there are some folks that have so little decorum—Your ladyship knows the two tramotane Misses ****. They came in black silk negligees to a morning visit.—— What does your ladyship think of that? I pertest the eldest has an immense thick leg. I verily believe it is as long and as thick as major ****'s. I have such a prodigious deal to say to your ladyship, that I know not where to begin. I have only been once at court, to see the Prince of Wales. A chit! your ladyship knows I hate children,
but

but all the world was teasing one with questions about the prince. I vow, I thought I should have fainted. There was what d'ye callum's, the mercer's wife, where I bought my yellow lustring. The filthy creature had got a sack on of the very same piece; and, as I hope for the mercies of heaven, she had the impudence to *coxtsy*. I assure your ladyship, I thought I should have died upon the spot; and then I had got some filthy caudle which made me still more sick. I forgot to tell your ladyship that I had my yellow lustring on, and spilt some caudle upon it.— But that I did not value, for I gave it to Jenny as soon as I got home, and I would have given it her if the caudle had not touched it. Foh! how I hate the filthy thing! I have charged Jenny never to wear it in my presence: I pertest to your ladyship, I think I should faint at the sight of it yet. But I am running on at a strange rate, and I have quite
 forgot

forgot to say any thing about the affair which your ladyship mentioned of colonel ****, and lady Biddy *****. It was quite a tramotane affair, I can assure your ladyship; for I have had my intelligence from the best hand. The night before the Queen was brought to bed, lady B—, went in a chair to the colonel's lodgings. Your ladyship will not be surprized at this, for you know it is not the first time that she has done such a thing. But she had a new *detour* on this occasion. She sent for Mrs. **** out of the city, and you know the poor woman loves to tipple, so, ma'am, she plies the poor woman with tasting, till they say the filthy creature could not stand; and then, ma'am, she sends her home in her own chair, with her footman, forsooth, and flambeaux. But now cannot your ladyship guess at the end of all this? Why now, ma'am, she pretends to receive a card, requesting her to see lady **** immediately

—no chair ! no footmen ! what must be done, but a hackney chair be called.—

And so, ma'am, to be sure she would not let any of her liveries be seen with a hackney chair. But only think, ma'am, what a head the poor woman must have ! for lady ****, who, as she pretended, had sent for her, was that very evening at Mrs. *** rout. This was *vaiisly* fine ! for the dowager lady **** happening to call on lady B— almost as soon as her ladyship was gone off, and being told, by her woman, that she was gone by desire to lady ***, and knowing, ma'am, as your ladyship knows she easily might, that lady *** was at Mrs. ***'s rout, she smoked something particularly, as she was told that her ladyship went in a hackney chair ; and so, ma'am, she orders one of her footmen to dog the chair, and to see where lady B— was set down. It is very certain, ma'am, that she was set down at the Colonel's lodgings, and that she

staid

staid seven and thirty minutes. I am *afraid*
I have tired your ladyship, with this tramotane
affair, but it was your ladyship's own desire.

I have the honour, &c.

P. S. I think, ma'am, his Majesty is grown
taller, for when I talk to him, I am obliged
to hold up my head more than usual.

LET-

L E T T E R XI.

To ***** Esq;

HAVE you never seen a parcel of school boys about an apple-tree, where one, more dextrous than the rest, having ascended the tree, and stuck himself among the boughs, enjoys his apple, and looks with a smiling contempt upon the poor wights below? In vain they call upon him to throw down the fruit.—“ Why don’t you climb, says he, as I have done ?” at the same time the tantalizing rogue knows very well they cannot.

This is just the case with you and me. You have ascended into town, and from thence you cast your black eyes down upon your friend in the country, beckoning him to come to you, though very sensible all the while that he is fast in the parish-stocks.

Such

Such is the message I received by your servant ; a message unaccompanied by one syllable of news, or one single word of what you and the rest of the world are about ! not one apple from the tree of knowledge, to gratify the curiosity of *man that is born of a woman*.

What ! have you got no intelligence since your arrival in town ? is neither your barber, nor your taylor, nor your shoemaker a politician ? Has Mrs. *'s mantua-maker no scandal smoking hot ? Is the whole town become sober ; and, what is stranger still, honest ? Has no fair gamester pawned the last stake, nor forfeited honour itself to pay its debts ? No daughter of quality, out of revenge, eloped with John ? No miss in her teens, warm from the school of Richardson with extravagant virtue, received her dear Sir Charles from his Irish estate ? Alas ! what a dull, dull place

place would your town be, were none of these things to happen !

Lord have mercy upon us ! *** were scandal and quadrille to be made capital offences, what would become of half the genteel people about you ? Perish, they would most certainly, either by the law, or against it ; for if they were no longer able to kill their time, what could they do but kill themselves ?

As I love my country, and should be sorry to see it depopulated, I have thought of the following receipt for time-killing, in case such dreadful laws should be enacted.

Let every lady, infected with the itch of scandal, if her visiting places exceed not thirty-five, increase them to twice that number ; and chuse her houses as remote as possible from each other. Let her pay twenty visits,

more or less, every day. By this means, she will have the pleasure of hearing twice a week whether her friends be alive or dead.

She will strengthen her constitution by continual exercise, and all temptations to scandal will be avoided, as she cannot possibly stay to see any person whatever. Thus the day may be disposed of: But to kill the evening without quadrille—that I am afraid will be more difficult. I own I have racked my brain for expedients to little purpose. To invite sleep will be the only method, in order to which I would recommend either a proper quantity of opium, or five pages to be read in some such author, as your &c.

LET-

L E T T E R XII.

To the same.

MELANCHOLY is the aspect of ****-
place! I thought, as I passed it the
 other day, that the house itself seemed consci-
 ous of being deserted, all about it was so silent
 and solemn. The only living creatures I saw
 were two sparrows and a redbreast. The
 sparrows were fighting about a lodging in the
 roof; while the redbreast, perched upon the
 temple of Vulcan, sung the following

M O N O D Y.

The gentle pair that in these lonely shades,
 Wandering, at eve or morn, I oft have seen,
 Now all in vain I seek at eve or morn,
 With drooping wing, forlorn,
 Along the grove, along the daizied green,
 For them I've warbled many a summer's day,
 Till the light dews impearled all the plain,

Vol. I.

E

And

And the glad shepherd shut his nightly fold;
 Stories of love, and high adventures old
 Were the dear subjects of my tuneful strain.

Ah! where is now the hope of all my lays?
 Now they, perchance, that heard them all are
 With them the meed of melody is fled, [dead!
 And fled with them the listening ear of praise.
 Vainly I dreamt, that when the wintry sky
 Scatter'd the white flood on the wasted plain,
 When not one berry, not one leaf was nigh,
 To soothe keen hunger's pain,
 Vainly I dreamt my songs might not be vain.
 That oft within the hospitable hall
 Some scattered fragment haply I might find,
 Some friendly crumb perchance for me design'd,
 When seen despairing on the neighbouring wall,
 Deluded bird! those hopes are now no more!
 Dull time has blasted the departing year,
 And winter frowns severe,
 Wrapping his wan limbs in his mantle hoar.
 Yet not within the hospitable hall
 The chearful sound of human voice I hear;
 No piteous eye is near,
 To see me drooping on the lonely wall.

Now

Now you have heard a redbreast's song,
you shall hear a song

To a Redbreast.

Little bird, with bosom red,
Welcome to my humble shed !
Courtly domes of high degree
Have no room for thee and me.
Pride and pleasure's fickle throng
Nothing mind an idle song.

Daily near my table steal,
While I pick my scanty meal.
Doubt not, little tho' there be,
But I'll cast a crumb to thee ;
Well rewarded, if I spy
Pleasure in thy glancing eye ;
See thee, when thou'st eat thy fill,
Plume thy breast, and wipe thy bill.

Come, my feather'd friend, again!
Well thou know'st the broken pane.
Ask of me thy daily store :
Go not near AVARO's door :
Once within his iron-hall,
Woeful end shall thee befall.

Savage! — He would soon divest
Of its rosy plumes thy breast;
Then, with solitary joy,
Eat thee, bones and all, my boy!

LET.

LETTER XIII.

To Mr. *****

NOW why, in the name of common sense, will you stuff your letters with quotations? Is it to shew your learning? I know you are learned. Is it to imitate Voiture? Voiture was a pedant. At least it was the pedantic custom of his time to tag borrowed sentiments; and the letter-writing gentlemen were as proud of exhibiting verses from Horace and Virgil, as a school-boy after Christmas, of repeating *Propria quæ maribus*. I grant you that to quote a verse occasionally from an ancient or a modern author, may serve to illustrate or embellish your thought; but where is the merit of making a parade of it? Does it lie in the difficulty? There is no difficulty in it, as you shall soon be con-

vinced, for you shall find, Sir, that I too
could quote,

————— O Gods! how I could quote!
Peace then with your babbling! and hear me com-
plain.

No—————

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records.

But will you come to see me? No—————

Business must be dispatch'd ere thou can'st go;

Nor can'st thou stir, unless there be

An hundred horse and men to wait on thee,

And many a mule and many a cart;

What an unwieldy man thou art!

Indeed I am very dull without you, not-
withstanding the gay season is approaching.

Omnia nunc ridet, at si formosus Alexis

Abeat his montibus, videas et flumina sicca.

When thou art from me every place is desert,

And I methinks am savage and forlorn.

The tedious hours move heavily away,

And each long minute seems a lazy day.

But

But the case is very different with me when
I enjoy your company, my friend! and I may
say with Dryden,

*Winds murmur'd thro' the leaves your short delay,
And fountains o'er their pebbles chid your stay.*

*But, with your presence cheer'd, they cease to
mourn,*

And walks wear fresher greens at your return.

I am sorry to hear that Mrs. be-
haves so strangely on her son's marriage, but
one may ask in the words of Virgil,

Crudelis mater magis, an Puer improbus ille?

Improbus ille puer, crudelis tu quoque mater.

Yet she might have been warned by many
unhappy examples of her conduct,

Now ponder well ye parents dear, &c.

But mothers-in-law seldom consider any
thing except their own interest; and Ovid's
observation is too often true.

Lauda terribiles miscuit aconita noverca.

It is strange that those who have children by a first marriage, should venture on a second, for marriage is always a lottery: Not that

————— *I would blemish all the fair,
But yet, if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware;
And better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare.* }

I should be glad if you would tell me what the world is doing now and then. We hear nothing in this solitary part,

*Save when arrives the weekly Caravan
With news of human kind.*

But the master of the Caravan is now dead, and we are very badly off. Poor wight!

————— *He did most plainly prove,
He could no longer live, than he could move.*

However, I am glad to hear that he will be succeeded by his son.

O fortunate Puer ! Tu nunc eris alter ab illo.

Mrs. ——— is gone to Bath, but in my opinion

Ægrotat animo magis quam corpore.

I am perfectly well at present, not even a head-
ach to complain of.

Mens sana in corpore sano.

Adieu ! one quotation more, and then,

Vale memor nostri !

LET

LETTER XIV.

To the same.

I Rejoice in your kind wishes, as they are a new proof of your regard for me, and as I am sure they proceed from the tenderness of friendship. But what, my dear sir, can he want who is already content; who lives within the limits of his circumstances, and who has said unto his desires, *Thus far shall ye go, and no farther?* This is the end of all philosophy, and poor is the philosopher who has not gained this end. If a man preserves such a state of mind, he acts agreeably to his reasonable nature; if he does not, it were better, as lord B. says, that he wore a long tail, and went upon four legs. His lordship recommends such a condition as preferable to that of a man who should not be permitted

to

to make use of his reason; and pray where is the difference, whether the use of that faculty be restrained or neglected?

I will tell you a secret: I have found out a scheme for evading two christian duties, and I hope too it is an innocent one. These duties are mortification and self-denial. For my part, I never practise either of them, and I manage it thus. I neither covet my neighbour's house, nor his wife, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. You see I have forgot to mention the servant and the maid; but these too are among the things that I do not covet. I look upon the possessions of every man not only with an unenvious, but with an indifferent eye; by which means I avoid a thousand mortifications, which my own curiosity, or the vanity of others, would daily bring upon me.

This

This, you will say, is a certain consequence, but how came I by such a state of mind, or how do I manage it to be indifferent to things which others pursue with so much eagerness, that they frequently forfeit their quiet, if not their virtue to obtain them? In that question, Sir, you have laid open part of the argument. I am of that poet's mind, who "thought it not worth his quiet to be great." The road to power and perferment is often dangerous, almost always dirty. Can a mind that is conscious of the dignity of human nature, and acts agreeably to it, sneak whole years at the levee of a great man? Should I do it, I could not support the sense of my own meanness; or would habitual cringing take away the sense of that meanness, Heaven preserve me from such a state of mind! How low would your poor friend be fallen! how despicable in your opinion! I have praised

one lord or two in my time : But it was to their merit, not to their nobility I paid that sacrifice. I would have reared the same altars to that merit in a peasant.

Sensible, as you see, that the ways and means of acquiring honours and dignities would be inconsistent with my peace of mind, you will not wonder that I lightly esteem them.

What is there on earth that can have any value when it comes in competition with our quiet ? Virtue is the only thing that can, because, though it may cost us some trouble and pains, it brings with it a large recompence.

But this is what no external enjoyments can boast. For what recompence can the gifts of fortune make me for the uneasiness they would cost me to acquire them ? The acquisition

fiction might for a while sooth my vanity, but I should soon perceive, with St. *Albans*, that riches have no real advantage except in their distribution.

Mine is not the philosophy of the fox, neither have I any *friarly contempt* of the gifts of Fortune. If the blind girl should run against me in her course, I will not avoid her, but I will lay no trap for her. "No, poor Fortune, you are blind, and I will not deceive you. Should you fall into my embrace, you would be disappointed. I am not of your family. Your votaries, it seems, must have *a little of the fool, and much of the knave* *." I am the reverse. I have little of the knave, and much of the fool. So, dear Fortune, if you stumble upon me, it will be your own fault."

* *BACON'S Moral Essays.*

Is not this, Sir, an honest way of thinking? More honest than wise, perhaps you will say. Be it so. But it is to my purpose to think honestly wisdom, for the same reason that I think contentment wealth, these being all the wisdom and all the wealth that I have.

I take a due estimate of riches, and give them credit for all they are worth. I acknowledge that they will not only purchase the conveniences but the elegancies of life; that they will aid the intercourse of friendship, and enable a man to look forward to approaching age without the apprehension of want. This is all that any reasonable man will allow them. On the other hand, they have inconveniences enough to set against these advantages. In a religious respect, they add a heavy load to the duties of life: In a moral sense, they are dangerous, for they frequently overturn the virtues of temperance and humility,

mility, and establish pride and luxury on their ruins. Though they may aid the intercourse of friendship, they will endanger its sincerity; for the sunshine of affluence engenders many more reptile than ethereal friends. The friendship of the great must therefore always be tinged with suspicion, but *if a poor man has a friend, he is to him as a right hand, or as a right eye.* As the poet said of his mistress,

The smile of fortune might suspicion raise,
But here I know that I am loved alone.

I thank God that I was not born to an estate. It is a great misfortune to be born to an estate; and many are the miseries to which a person thus circumstanced is exposed. In the first place, he is in the utmost danger of being a fool, particularly if his parents are not over-wise, and either send him to a public school, with his pockets full of money, or put a tutor under him at home. In the

next

next place, he stands a fair chance of making as bad a figure in morals as in understanding, and it is seldom, very seldom indeed, that both are preserved irreproachable.

Upon the whole then, have I any reason to repine? Have I not much more cause to be thankful than if I had made a parody on my catechism, by being born to an estate, wherein I was made a member of Parliament, the child of fortune, and an inheritor of the ancient manor-house.

By this free and philosophic way of thinking, I evade those duties I before mentioned; and I beg you will give due credit to my sincerity, when I assure you that there can be no *self-denial* so troublesome to me as that of declining your kind invitation, and that I know of nothing which could *mortify* me so much as your neglecting to write to me.

LETTER XV.

From the same.

IT has often given me pain to behold the poor provision that is made for the younger clergy. When a person of a genteel education, perhaps of a genteel family, which is often the case, is confined to the miserable pittance of thirty or forty pounds a year, what must he feel, if he has the least sensibility? I never see a curate of a parish, either in town or country, without looking upon him as a person suffering under the very bad regulations of the ecclesiastical police. There are many ways, I think, by which this matter might be mended. I easily foresee that those clergymen who are in possession of livings would find it no difficult matter to give reasons against advancing the stipend of their cu-

rates.

rates. And in many cases, no doubt, their pleas might be very just: But supposing that means might be found for advancing the income of livings, the beneficed clergyman might then be able to pay his curate more liberally. And I do not think that this would be a difficult affair. What if an act of Parliament could be procured for the better payment of vicarial tythes? This I am sure of, that some such act is necessary, for if I may form a general judgment, from my own private observation, I do not believe that two thirds of the value of vicarial tythes are paid throughout England. The value of every thing is greatly increased to the farmer, while the consideration which the vicar receives for his tythes is frequently regulated by the estimate of former centuries.

Surely the decent provision of so large and so respectable a body as the clergy, merits

the attention of the legislature. It is impossible that society should subsist without divine sanctions, and shall the ministers of those sanctions be left unable to support that dignity, which the nature of their office requires? Shall the thread-bare coat of a clergyman be the jest of the purse-proud grazier or farmer, while he withholds his indisputable rights? What strange regulations are these? A taylor, a shoe-maker, an exciseman, a common day-labourer has frequently an income equal to that of a curate, whose education and profession entitle him to the character of a gentleman, and give him a right to keep the best company. Such company, however, it will be impossible for him to keep, without dressing more elegantly and feeding his worship's servants more liberally than he can afford. I know there are not wanting illiberal people, who think a clergyman out of his province when he seeks the conversation and company
of

of men of better fortunes, though not of better sense or education, than himself; but “that always,” as Pope says, “shews great pride or little sense.” I thank God, with the pharisee, that I am not like those.

Y O U think that the fortune which I have to the lot of the younger clergy is inadequate to my situation, and consequently an improper one. I am of a different opinion. For, is it not the duty of a young clergyman to set as well as to pray? And would you draw him into temptation by putting it in his power to eat? Surely this is inconsistent with your strict william and henry of me. More over you know very well, that, according to his apostolic character, he ought not to mix with the world, and would you enable him to be possessed of two? I grant you that his situation is in a country which is not altogether the most desirable, but I am not at all of those and do flourish with me.

F 3 LET.

L E T T E R XVI.

To the same.

YOU think that the provision which falls to the lot of the younger clergy is inadequate to their station, and consequently an improper one. I am of a different opinion: For, is it not the duty of a young clergyman, to *fast* as well as to pray? And would you draw him into temptation by putting it in his power to eat? Surely this is inconsistent with your usual wisdom and benevolence. Moreover you know very well, that, agreeably to his apostolic character, he ought not to *take more than one coat*, and would you enable him to be possessed of two? I grant you that, if his mission be in a country which is troublesome to the traveller, he may be indulged with one pair of shoes, and be furnished with ends
and

and awls for the laudable purpose of repairing them. Dr. Young was unreasonable when he wished for

“ Enough to keep two shoes on Sunday clean,”

if he meant to be possessed of two pair of shoes; but if his wishes extended only to a little oil, or goose-grease, to anoint his only pair on Saturday night, perhaps he might be indulged.

I own that, in this age of intemperance, it edifieth me much to see so many of my brethren precluded from all temptation to luxury: happily, *now*, the necessities of food and raiment are risen to such a price, that an ordinary curate will find enough to do to keep his corporal tenement in repair, though he should frequently lend a hand to it himself. For this purpose, I think that canon ought to be set

aside, which forbiddeth manual labour to my brethren. The wise Alfred commanded his clergy to learn some mechanic art. Why should they not now? Would not this be much better than, what you recommend, to have their stipends raised? What would that do but encourage idleness and luxury? I think a curate might decently follow any occupation except those of the baker and the miller. Those perhaps might alter the complexion of his dress too much: But he might very well exercise the domestic trades of a taylor, or a weaver, or a shoe-maker; or the humbler art of a cobbler, and so mend the understandings of his parishioners in a double capacity. He might keep a drug-shop, and administer as well to their bodily as to their spiritual maladies; or a barber's shop, and, by the operations of Saturday night, make them fit to appear before him on Sunday.

But

But I think that such curates only as have families should be permitted to practise these trades: a single man, if he is industrious, may yet do without them. I know a curate of a neighbouring parish, who looks well, dines once a year, at Christmas time, with the 'squire, and keeps himself in decent repair, by an industrious use of the following implements, viz. two darning needles, one of a large size for grey stockings, and another, smaller, for black, being possessed of two pair; a small clue of strong brown thread, with a proper sized needle for coat, waistcoat, and breeches; and an awl, an end and a piece of rosin for his shoes; with all which his benevolent parishioners, according to their respective trades, have supplied him gratis.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

To the same.

MY last visit to you has almost killed me. A most dreadful night! Why did you press me to stay? Had you said nothing; had you advised me to go; had you even given a hint, that your rooms or your beds were unprepared, I should have staid: But this spirit of contradiction has cost me dear. Surely you knew that I was possessed with it, and took the advantage of it to save hay and corn, and other articles which my stay would have cost you.—But, indeed, I have got a very bad cold. Should I not survive it, I shall lay my death at your door, and the least punishment I can inflict upon you will be to make you my executor. This office I insist upon it that you shall discharge, and I have drawn

up

up, the following inventory of my effects, as well for your direction, as that it may serve for a copy of an advertisement before the sale.

To be sold by inch of candle.

The genuine household goods, wearing apparel, tools, and stock in trade of a poet lately deceased. At the following reasonable rates.

	l.	s.	d.
1. One coat, originally black	0	2	6
2. One hat, ditto	0	0	9
3. One pair of stockings, ditto	0	0	3
4. One grizzle wig, run to feed	0	0	6
5. One Dutch tobacco box	0	0	4
6. One pair of shoes lately soled	0	2	3
7. One pair of breeches, newly purchased with the profits of a hymn to Apollo	0	14	6

8. One waistcoat, not the worse for my own wear, N. B. it is right

Monmouth-

Monmouth-street, and not one
of your vile Rag-fair penny-
worths ——— To 1 6

9. Two shirts somewhat the worse
for wear ——— 0 2 0

10. One pair of mourning buckles,
originally black, but now exhi-
biting here and there the natural
colour of the iron 0 0 4

11. One Dog that answers to the
name of Phœbus. N. B. He
has an excellent nose, and
would sometimes find a crust,
when his master sought in vain
for one ——— 0 5 0

12. One pair of knit worsted garters,
which were purchased of a lady
by a copy of verses, written for
that purpose ——— 0 0 6

13. A

l. s. d.

13. A tin coffee-pot, a tin candle-
stick, and a brown jordan in one
lot — — — 0 1 6
14. Seven crow-quills, a gill of ink,
and four sheets of six-penny pa-
per, in one lot 0 0 2
15. An earthen jugg, a stone plate,
and a pewter pot, in one lot 0 1 3
16. A sheet, a quilt, a blanket and
pillow, in one lot. N. B. The
pillow-cover is at present in
pawn, but may be redeemed for
two-pence — — — 0 3 0
17. A convenience for the chamber
in case of sickness, &c. The
cover somewhat out of condi-
tion — — — 0 1 0
18. A panegyric on my executor.
N. B. This goes with the
above-mentioned article, and

*

the

l. s. d.

the purchaser will have it gratis 0 0 0

19. Half a page of a comedy entitled
The court of Bythinia; three
tragedy soliloquies, on Love,
Rage and Suicide; a song a la
mode, and my own epitaph, in
one lot 0 2 0

20. An acrostic finished all to one let-
ter; but as that letter is an X,
and somewhat obstinate, it will
be sold at the moderate price of 0 0 1½

21. A poem on the birth of the
prince. This piece being, by ill
chance, deposited under a pen-
nyworth of cheese, Phœbus,
above-mentioned, tore part of it
off. It will therefore be sold for 0 3 4

22. Principles of a patriot: These
may be bought for 1 1 0

23. The

l. s. d.

23. The Poet's Commonwealth.
Enquire of any Bookseller in
Great Britain or Ireland for the
value of this article

24. *Folia Sybillina, sive disiecta membra*
Poetae, being a collection of Stan-
zas, couplets, lines, half lines,
similies, rhymes, &c. &c. rea-
dy to be worked up occasion-
ally

2 6

Such, Sir, is the inventory of my effects,
which I doubt not but you will dispose of to
the best advantage for the use of my creditors,
whose names, together with their respective
debts, are as follow.

1. To Mr. Haze Snip, of Thread-
needle-street, taylor, for sundry
times cleaning and scouring
my black coat

5 2½

2. To

2. To Mr. Patrick Stout, linen
draper in Smock-Alley 0 10 0

3. To Mr. Giles Dipp, of Middle-
Row, for a second-hand griz-
zle ——— 0 2 6

4. To Mr. Aaron Jacob of Mon-
mouth-street, for several articles
of cloathing ——— 3 7 6

N. B. Aaron is a vile cut-throat,
and I would have him paid the

last of all my creditors. Once he

had the impudence to offer me

a cast livery in sale, and I have

reason to believe that he stole

from me a MS. translation of

Tasso's Jerusalem, when it

was almost finished.

5. To Mr. Bowels, Butcher in Lea-
denhall-market, for sundries 0 7 4

N. B. Mr. Bowels is a very

good-natured man, and would

sometimes

sometimes step up to my garret
with a sheep's head, and hear a
fonnet. Let him therefore be
first paid. After him, please to
pay

6. To Mrs. Parsley, green grocer in
Grub-street, for sundries 0 5 0

* * * Mrs. Parsley is a kind-
hearted woman, for, when I
repeated verses,

— She would listen even to extacy,
And bring me similes of a thousand kinds.

These memorandums will be of use to you
in the management of my affairs. As to the
rest, I would be interred as privately as pos-
sible, otherwise that cut-throat Aaron will
dig me up, and sell me to the surgeons.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To the same.

YOU have read of a philosopher who laughed but once in his life, and of another who never laughed at all. You shall now be told of a third, who has laughed only twice. The first occasion I believe you will never forget: what has since provoked my risibility was the absurdity of a Spanish poet, who, unfortunately for him, fell into my hands this morning. In a stanza on the nightingale, he says, *when I hear that little bird so vary and multiply its tones, I fancy with myself that it has got a hundred thousand other nightingales in its belly, that sing through its throat.* But you shall have the passage.

Con diferencia tal, con gracia tanta,
 Aquel Ruysenor llora; que sospecho

Que

Que tiene otros cien mil dentro del pecho,
Que alterna su dolor por su Garganta.

Of all the hyperboles I have met with, this grave Spaniard's is the most ridiculous.

There are two kinds of poetry which afford me equal entertainment. If it be either very good or very bad, I am sure to find my account in reading it, and the middling sort only to me is intolerable. Somewhere or other I met with a poem, the subject of which was a party of pleasure, or an excursion to the coast of *Suffex*; and the minute descriptions of the excursive Bard, I remember, delighted me much. Describing their party, he says

There were three amiable sisters here;

Besides, each sister had a brother dear.

Sometimes he would rise to the sublime, as in the following couplet on the tea-kettle.

The burning lamp, with spirits well supplied,
Did swell the kettle in a boiling tide.

But description seems to have been his talent.
Speaking of the pleasures of their journey, he
represents the very steeds they rode upon as
delighted.

Our horses too were pleased most sensibly,
And prick'd their ears, and cock'd their tails
on high.

With equal happiness of expression he de-
scribes the honourable and gentleman-like
sentiments of the party.

And when as long as well we could, we staid,
Then, without grudging, each his reckoning
paid.

Now that you have seen part of the works
of this extraordinary Bard, perhaps you may
be curious to know his name. All that I
can learn of it is from a couplet of his own,
prefixed to his poetical works.

Ye young in years, I dedicate to you
All these my works, sign'd E. and W.

I sometimes imagine that there is a kind of poetical incubus which has violent commerce with innocent persons, and makes them bring forth these mishapen monsters of the mind.

After the defeat of the rebels, the duke in his return from *Scotland*, called at *Corby* castle in *Cumberland*, a seat of Mr. *Howard*. The family was from home, and the gardener shewed the ornaments of the place to the duke, during which he took the liberty to tell him, that he had composed a poem on the gardens, statues, &c. Here, said his highness, are the statues of *Cephalus* and *Procris*: What have you said of these? To which the blue-aproned Bard replied;

He bent his bow, and shot at random
And kill'd his wife for a memorandum.

L E T T E R XIX.*

From *****; Esq;

THE ladies! Sir, oh! the ladies are nymphs, graces, goddesses!—— The scurrilous terms of jilts, coquettes and prudes, were the invention of mortified impudence, or disappointed vanity. To their praise be it spoken, they are always honourable, always consistent, always sincere. They never, like faithless men, shed the dissembled or the designing tear.—— Their tears, poor hearts! always flow from pity or from love. So one of their own sex has assured us.——Madam *Sevigné*, I think her name is; and I assure you that madam *Sevigné* was an excellent good woman, and a fine lady. Another French lady too, madam *de L'Enclos*, has done and said much for the honour of

* The letter which occasioned this was lost.

her sex. She has proved to a demonstration that what narrow-thoughted people say of the inconstancy of women is all moonshine; it being very clear that inconstancy is the doctrine of nature. Excellent woman! far be it from me ever to let my censure fall upon the fair, but I think they are ungrateful to her memory, if she is yet undistinguished by temples and altars.

Nature has always been partial to our own sex, and profuse in her favours to the ladies of every country. She has not only armed them with the gentle and attractive graces, but inspired their tender hearts with heroic resolution and noble resentment. Witness the never to be forgotten madam de Suzé, who, when she was happily rid of an odious husband in this world, changed her religion, that she might not see him in the next. What an extraordinary instance of *greatness* of

mind have we in the celebrated *Christina*, who could leave the important dignity of a throne, and the troublesome cares of a nation's happiness, to retire into the bosom of science and the arms of the Muses ! to feed on the delicious praise of the sons of literature, and enjoy the approbation of soothing abbots !

Can any thing, my friend, be more laudable than sincerity, than the ingenuous acknowledgment of our weakness ? And how many illustrious ladies of our own age and nation, have been remarkable for this ! Why should I mention *Vane* or lady *Mary*, or *Manly*, or *Behn* of openhearted memory ? or the celebrated *Constantia Philips*, whose noble ardour meeting with no suitable return from the inhabitants of this cold climate, was at last indulged by the more genial suns of *Jamaica* ; whither she greatly retired, to cherish her native fires, and woo her sable loves.

It were easy for me to produce many other shining instances of female virtue; such as, for your idle encomiums, I wish you may never have the honour to know. Adieu, my friend! Reason defend you! —

W
 as Mr. *** against the most
 amiable part of the Christian religion, it is possible
 that a portion of his hostility can be directed
 with that charming logic, against which he
 levels his satirical irony. No verily, my
 friend, you are not altogether out of a way.
 It is not an enemy that does him this.
 However, if that be the
 answer, that will bring me your reason-
 tion. As the sun is supposed to irradiate
 all the other planets, so one smile from a fair
 celestial body will reflect a pleasing light on the
 whole system.

LET-

LETTER XX.

To the same.

WHAT could incense so polite a man as Mr. ****, against the most amiable part of the Creation? Is it possible that a person of his sensibility can be out of love with that charming sex, against which he levels his satyrical irony? No verily, my friend, you are not altogether *out* of love. It is not an enemy that hath done this. *In amore hæc sunt mala*. However, if that be the case, the next post will bring me your recantation. As the sun is supposed to irradiate all the other planets, so one smile from a particular lady will reflect a pleasing light on the whole sex.

There is, notwithstanding, a spirit of reviling gone out against the fair part of our species, and if you are possessed with that, I must endeavour to conjure it out of you. Stand still : Let me draw a circle around you——And now I mutter my spell.

The benevolent Author of the universe, consulting only the happiness of his creatures, has appointed variety of means to promote the sweet union of love. Probably for this end alone he constituted difference of sexes. And what has he not done for the female of our own species to make her amiable in our eyes ? All the soft and gentle graces, the sweet smiles of winning beauty, the obedient blush of modesty, the charming fears of dependent weakness, and the tender apprehensions of the feeling heart, are for this purpose appropriated to that lovely sex. By what fine proportions, what nicely moulded features,

features, what expressive eyes, what delicate complexions are many of them distinguished ! Many of them, whose beauty is the least of their praise : For theirs are the finer ornaments of the mind, sense embellished and humanized by an habitual softness of manners, and knowledge collected from the labours of the Muses. Theirs is the practice of every moral and social duty. All the virtues that are founded in the sensibility of the heart are eminently theirs. Pity, the attribute of angels, and friendship, the balm of life, delight to dwell in the female breast. What a forlorn, what a savage creature would man be without the humanizing offices of the gentle sex ! How much are his mind and manners softened and refined by the delicate passion of love ! Is it not for the fair object of his affections, that he studies all the elegant and embellishing graces ? Does he not imitate her polished manners, and acquire, as it were by sympathy,

sympathy, her tender and delicate sentiments? After the endearing union of their loves and interests, when mutual confidence has removed every apprehension, what are the pleasures that he may not enjoy? How are his cares softened, his prospects brightened, his delights enhanced by communication! How ungrateful then, should he reproach that amiable sex, from which he derives in some measure, both his virtue and his happiness!

What do the several names that you have collected prove, but that women may have great talents, of which some of those names will be a lasting monument? Many of them, indeed, behaved in a manner unworthy of those talents, but probably their ingenuity was a snare to them: Is it unknown to you that libertines take a diabolical pleasure in ruining the virtues they admire?

* * * * *

I quit

I quit this subject to attend a lady, whose
friendship I esteem as my greatest happiness;
a lady whose accomplishments are an orna-
ment to human nature, and whose virtues
would do honour to a philosopher. Adieu,
my friend, love reform you!

LET-

LETTER XXI.

To Mr. ****

CAN you tell me who was the author of that short aphorism, *Happiness begins at home*? If I knew his name, I would build a temple, or at least dedicate a volume to his memory. Whether he were a courtier or a cottager, I am sure that he was a wise man and perfectly acquainted with human nature. I never felt this truth so sensibly as at present. During my late peregrinations, I was frequently amused, sometimes pleased, but always dissipated. Very different now that I am returned to my own bed and my own closet! my mind is perfectly at ease, and has recovered that even calmness, which, in my opinion, is preferable to all those meteor-like pleasures, which, after a momentary glitter, dissolve in vapours.

vapours. Many times a day, as I walk
across my chamber, do I repeat those beau-
tiful verses of Catullus.

O quid solutis beatius curis !

Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
Labore fessi, venimus larem ad nostrum,
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto.

O for the dear domestic hour,

When care foregoes the peaceful mind ;

When tir'd with many a painful tour,

At length an easy home we find ;

At length repose the weary head

Safe on our old acquainted bed !

Thither I am going, therefore I wish you a
good night. You cannot complain of the
shortness of this letter, for six verses are at
any time equal to sixty lines of prose.

LET-

L E T T E R XXII.

To the same.

IF you would be more sparing of your compliments, you would be the most valuable man alive ; but how shall we reconcile this fault of yours with many of your good qualities, with your veracity, your sincerity, your friendship ? Do not you know that complimentary speeches are as much a snare to the modesty of an author, as to the chastity of a maid ? But perhaps you will be less liberal of your flattery for the future, if I tell you that an author is not to be envied even for his literary reputation. He is exposed to many inconveniences, and lies under disadvantages of which you may have no conception. Studious and abstracted minds acquire a habit of looking inwardly ; hence they become absent,

and inattentive to the common forms of society; in consequence of which (dreadful consequence!) They are pronounced awkward and unpolite in the circle of the *Beau Monde*. You remember a story, related by the elegant author of the *Adventurer*, of an unfortunate poet, who was sent for by a lady to read his tragedy.

But these are not all the sufferings of authorship. There are those who expect that an author should talk as he writes; that his thoughts should be as fine, and his language as elegant at the tea-table as in the closet; nay, what is more unreasonable still, that his knowledge should be universal.

A friend of mine, though he is really elegant both in the closet, and out of it, was once, as an author, in very ridiculous circumstances. You shall hear the story.

Soon

Soon after the publication of a popular performance, he was invited to dine with a literary lady in ——— street. The lady had two pretty, pert little daughters, the youngest about nine, the eldest about twelve years old. The dining room facing the street, the young ladies, who had been for some time upon the watch for the gentleman, perceived his approach. The lady mother was not come down. He was conducted by a servant to the dining room. The younger of the ladies had placed herself just at the opening of the door, in a dancing-school posture, to pay him the first compliments. Bowing, as he entered, to the eldest, who stood in the middle of the room, he unfortunately stumbled over her sister. Miss screamed, got up, and limped across the floor. My lady flew down: A surgeon was called, but happily there was no harm done. His misfortunes, however, did not end here. My lady had invited

Mrs. ****, who was deep read in the musty volumes of romance. This lady unmercifully questioned him on the merits of every book of that class, from Amadis of Gaul, to Valentine and Orson, in all which he discovered a profound ignorance. She looked upon him with contemptuous pity and disappointment. But the pest of the company and his most bitter sorrow, was Mr. ———, who had wrote a treatise on conic sections. This gentleman whose mind and body were equally curvilinear, talked of nothing but parabolas, rectangles and secants. He investigated the axes, and defined the directrices and the foci. At last, finding my friend obstinately silent, he appealed to him for his opinion on the doctrine of Apellonius. He answered, that he had bestowed very little time on those studies; upon which the geometrician asked him, with an air of insolent complacency, if he knew what the segment
of

of a circle was. "The segment of a circle, said he, is the head and shoulders of a person with whom I lately dined." The man of Cones was offended; nobody was pleased; and my poor friend departed with dissatisfaction and disgrace.

L E T T E R XXIII.

To Mr. ****.

MR. Sheridan, in his Essay on Education, has reckoned, among other species of poetry to which blank verse may be adapted, the pastoral. I do not remember to have met with any original pieces of the pastoral kind in blank verse, but I am nevertheless of opinion, with Mr. Sheridan, that the thing might be attempted with success. That species of verse is indeed incapable of any thing vulgarly low or rustic, except in the burlesque way, but it is not on that account unqualified for the pastoral. For can the scene of this poetry be supposed to lie among the boors, who till the fields and tend the flocks in our own days, among whom no poetry ever existed; and who, in point of understanding,

derstanding, are very little superior to the cattle they superintend? Without doubt the proper æra to which pastoral poetry should be referred, is that age of simplicity when the princes of the people were confessedly employed in the labours of the field? When ploughmen and shepherds were historians, poets, legislators, and astronomers. Such times there certainly were, if any credit is to be given to profane history; and, referred to such times as those, the pastoral may be a composition of that dignity and simplicity to which blank verse is so well adapted.

But you make it your question, whether we cannot have a species of pastoral poetry drawn from our own times? I answer No, if our own shepherds must be the Interlocutors. Besides, tho' the face of nature is the same, the manners and customs of mankind

are greatly changed; and what a strange figure would those of our peasants make in any kind of poetry, except the burlesque!

Both Theocritus and Virgil found it necessary to draw their pictures of pastoral life from times much higher than their own, and though they sometimes introduced recent events in their Bucolics, yet it was with no more propriety than the shepherd's boy of Pope, was introduced feeding his flock and singing his polished song on the banks of the Thames,

But Theocritus was less guilty of this than any of his imitators have been; he does not often, in those poems called pastorals, draw the action from his own times; he sometimes goes four or five hundred years higher for it.

Upon

Upon the whole, truth, nature, and propriety all plead for confining the subjects of the pastoral to those times of simplicity which we call the golden age.

I will conclude these observations with a specimen of such a pastoral as I am here speaking of, upon the merit of which, however, I shall not rest the cause.

MENALCAS: a Pastoral.

Now cease your sweet pipes, shepherds!
cease your lays;

Ye warbling train, that fill the echoing groves
With your melodious love-notes ! Die yewinds,
That o'er Arcadian valleys blow ! Ye streams,
Ye garrulous old streams, suspend your course,
And listen to Menalcas —————

Menalcas.

Come fairest of the beauteous train that sport
On Ladon's flowery side, my Delia come !
For thee thy shepherd, silent as he sits
Within the green wood, sighs ; for thee prepares
The

The various wreath in vain ; explores the shade
Where lowly lurks the violet blue, where
 droops,

In tender beauty, its fair spotted bells

The cowslip : oft with plaintive voice he calls

The wakeful echo, wearies with thy name

The wakeful echo—What are streams or flowers,
Or songs of blythe birds? What the blushing
 rose,

Young health, or music, or the voice of praise,

The smile of vernal suns, the fragrant breath

Of evening gales, when Delia dwells afar ?

These verses are sufficient for a specimen.

Adieu!

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

To the same.

YOU need not be jealous of my friendship, since, how well soever I may love the object of it, my heart will still have room enough for you. I trust it is not a narrow heart; if you thought so, would you be solicitous to retain a place in it? Your concern for the peace of it, however, is kind; and I have the honour to be of your opinion as to the general danger of entering into friendship with the softer sex. I am well aware what thin partitions divide the bounds of love and friendship; and how easily the passion of the lover will take root in the affection of the friend. When hearts are united in the warm and tender connections of friendship, it is not difficult to foresee, in what such a sympathy
between

between different sexes might terminate. But, with these convictions upon me, can you think me in danger? Do not you think I shall guard every avenue to my heart with the utmost diligence? Indeed I shall; and I cannot but think my self safe, in this particular instance, for many reasons. Should I fall, I assure you my fall will be involuntary; and, moreover, I assure you that, should this be the case, you shall never know it.— You shall have no opportunity to plume yourself upon your sagacity, nor, with a self-approving pity, gravely shake your head, and say, *I told you how this would end*. I own, however, I find such a charm in the friendship of this amiable and accomplished woman, that I should not know how to give it up, were I apprehensive of the danger you mention: but I tell you, it cannot, shall not be; so peace to that subject!

The

The question you put, “ Whether friendship can subsist at all between different sexes, exclusively of love ? ” I am interested in answering, and shall be as explicit as possible.

It is certain, that the admiration of great qualities or virtues in any person, is frequently an inducement to us to cultivate the regard and acquaintance of such a one. Friendship may, therefore, have its origin in esteem. For my own part, I believe that to be the genuine foundation of it ; and that, friendship constructed upon any other principle, will prove but a building of straw. I even look upon consent of manners and inclinations to be a more unessential basis of friendship than esteem ; and I have known two very dear friends, of tempers totally different, united upon this principle. Now, is it not possible that I may admire the same great qualities which I behold in you, in a person of a different

rent sex? If so, is it not equally possible that the esteem consequent upon this admiration may exist distinctly from every other sensation? Certainly it may, since it had not the sex, but the qualities of the person for its object. This must be granted upon demonstration; and will it be denied that the same cause must produce the same effects? Would not the same esteem, which was the origin of my friendship with you, produce the same friendship for your sister, or your grand-mother, or any woman upon earth? The point is very clear, therefore let us leave it; and now turn your eyes upon the amiable lady who led us to the subject.

She is arrived at that period of life when women become the most agreeable friends. She is neither too old to be lively, nor too young to be grave, so that in either state of mind she appears equally graceful and unaffected.

In her more serious moments, there is a mixture of tender melancholy and philosophic calmness in her countenance, which is so expressive, that it serves for a comment on her thought. You read the approaching reflection in her eye, which, as Prior says, " Drops sense distinct and clear." Her mind, however, is not the mansion of melancholy but of cheerfulness; which, agreeably to the definition of Addison, exerts itself rather as a habit than as an act. In conversation she shews the true politeness, for she always endeavours to make it turn upon those subjects, which she thinks the most agreeable to you; and, though she does not talk with brilliancy, she talks sensibly on every thing. She is acquainted with the French and Italian writers, whose works she reads in the original language, and is conversant with the politest and most elegant authors of our own country. Had her taste been early formed, and her studies directed by
proper

proper persons, both her knowledge and her judgment in the *Belles Lettres*, would have been more considerable than they are; but it is not yet too late for her to excel in these points, and whatever industry can obtain she will obtain, for she is indefatigable in her application to study. She possesses the native seeds of taste and genius, the strongest proof of which is her manner of writing, which is spirited and nervous. That charming sensibility which is the glory of the female nature, and makes that amiable sex so properly the object of our love and tenderness, this lady possesses in a very eminent degree. I do not think I shall say too much if I apply to her what was spoken of another lady, that she never beheld distress which she did not pity, and never pitied when she did not, if it were in her power, relieve. Her mind is naturally formed to be above every thing that is mean or sordid; her sentiments are enlarged; and her heart,

like

like her countenance, is open. I do not think that she deserves much praise for her virtues. They are constitutional, and not to practice them would be a violence to her nature. Her favourite science is music, and in this she excels most women that I have met with. She perfectly understands both the practical and theoretical part, and her expression, unlike the general execution of ladies, is both bold and graceful. She fingers with admirable ease and rapidity. It perhaps may give you no favourable idea of her person, to tell you that she appears to the greatest advantage in a full dress, unless you have observed that it is the same with many ladies, who are reputed handsome. She is about the middle size of women, proportionably made; her hair is a beautiful brown; her countenance neither round nor oval, but somewhat between both; her complexion is fresh; and

her eyes rather soft than vivid, but full of expression.

Thus have I answered, if not satisfied all your demands.—And now, for supper, “With what appetite I may.”

LET-

LETTER XXV.

To the same.

THOUGH our pleasures always fall short of hope and imagination, we are much more frequently deceived by the sensual, than the intellectual. The delights of friendship, memory and contemplation, seldom disappoint us much in what we expect from them, particularly the two last, as they are entirely dependant on ourselves.

Safe joys that only on ourselves depend !

Indeed, were all people of your disposition, who seem to devote yourself wholly to the inclinations of those that love you, the pleasures of friendship would be as certain as any other that we enjoy. Yet as we can but have few friends, and the company of those few, per-

haps, only occasionally, the treasures of the mind must be our great resource; and there is no faculty to which we are so much indebted for entertainment as the memory. I was led into this train of thinking by the pleasure I received in a late visit to the place of my nativity. The scenes of thoughtless gaiety and puerile amusement, which I had so long ago forsaken, restored to my mind many pleasing images which were connected with them. I had from my childhood a remarkable turn for retirement, and have frequently walked, when I was very young, two miles from home, to a place whose shady privacy aided contemplation. The romantic aspect of my native country probably added to this innocent enthusiasm; and the rude contrast of rocks, and woods, and waters impressed something of their own wild irregularity on my imagination. When I revisited these scenes you will suppose that they re-kindled in some measure

measure that enthusiasm which they first
cherished and inspired. They did: and be-
fore I left them, I wrote the following stanzas.

AN ODE

To the Genius of Westmorland.

Hail hidden Power of these wild groves,
These uncouth rocks, and mountains grey!
Where oft, as fades the closing day,
The family of Fancy roves.

In what lone cave, what sacred cell,
Coæval with the birth of time,
Wrapt in high cares, and thought sublime,
In awful silence dost thou dwell?

Oft in the depth of winter's reign,
As blew the bleak winds o'er the dale;
Moaning along the distant gale,
Has fancy heard thy voice complain.

Oft in the dark wood's lonely way,
Swift has she seen thee glancing by;
Or down the summer evening sky,
Sporting in clouds of gilded day.

If caught from thee the sacred fire,
 That glow'd within my youthful breast.
 Those thoughts too high to be express'd,
 Genius, if thou did'st once inspire ;

O pleas'd accept this votive lay,
 That in my native shades retir'd,
 And once, once more by thee inspir'd,
 In gratitude I pay.

LET-

L E T T E R XXVI.

To the same.

PRAY for your poor friend. He is turned idolater. He has forsaken the worship of his Fathers, and has bowed the knee to BAAL. This wicked world has been a snare to him, has drawn him from his allegiance to his lawful sovereign Apollo, and shamefully seduced him to the temple of Plutus. Has he performed any act of worship? You will say; has he been initiated in the barbarous rites? Hath his heart been hardened? His conscience seared? No: not so much. But an act of worship he hath performed. In evil hour did he fall from his integrity, pervert the sacred gifts of the Muses, and though not, as you will perceive,

without some struggles of remaining virtue,
composed the following

Hymn to Plutus.

Great God of wealth, before whose sacred
throne

Truth, honour, genius, fame and worth lie prone!
To thy throng'd temples take one votary more:
To thee a poet never kneel'd before.

Adieu the gods that caught my early prayer!
Wisdom that frown'd, and knowledge fraught
with care!

Friendship that every veering gale could move!
And tantalizing hope, and faithless love!
These, these are slaves that in thy livery shine;
For wisdom, friendship, love himself is thine!

For thee I'll labour down the mine's dark way,
And leave the confines of enlivening day;
For thee *Asturia's* shining sands explore,
And bear the splendors of *Potosi's* ore;
Scale the high rock, and tempt the raging sea,
And think, and toil, and wish, and wake for thee.

Farewell the scenes that thoughtless youth
could please!

The flowery scenes of indolence and ease.

Where

Where' you the way with magic power beguile,
Baffora's deeps, or Lybia's deserts smile.

Foes of thy worth, that, insolent and vain,
Deride thy maxims, and reject thy reign,
The frantic tribe of virtue shall depart,
And make no more their ravage in my heart.
Away " The tears that pity taught to flow !"
Away that anguish for a brother's woe !
Adieu to these, and every tiresome guest,
That drain'd my fortunes or destroy'd my rest !

Ah, good AVARO ! could I thee despise ?
Thee, good AVARO ; provident and wise ?
Plutus, forgive the bitter things I've said !
I love AVARO ; poor AVARO's dead.

Yet, yet I'm thine ; for fame's unerring tongue
In thy sooth'd ear thus pours her silver song.
" Immortal Plutus ! God of golden ease !
" Form'd every heart, and every eye to please !
" For thee content her downy carpet spreads,
" And rosy pleasure swells her genial beds.
" 'Tis thine to gild the mansions of despair ;
" And beam a glory round the brows of care.
" To cheat the lazy pace of sleepless hours,
" With marble fountains, and ambrosial bowers."

O grant

O grant me, Plutus, scenes like those I sung,
 My youthful lyre when vernal fancy strung.
 For me their shades let other STUDLEYS rear,
 Tho' each tree's water'd with a widow's tear!

Detested God!——forgive me! I adore.
 Great Plutus, grant me one petition more.
 Should Delia, tender, generous, fair and free,
 Leave love and truth, and sacrifice to thee,
 I charge thee, Plutus, be to Delia kind,
 And make her fortunes richer than her mind.
 Be hers the wealth all heaven's broad eye can
 view;
 Grant her, good God, Don Philip and Peru.

LET-

L E T T E R XXVII.

To the same.

WITH reason you bid adieu to your friend, if you think he has parted with his sensibility: For friendship may have its origin in esteem, but sensibility must support it. But indulge me, my friend; it is not yet so bad with me. The hymn to Plutus was only a kind of mock-worship, such as savages pay to a power they hate, and in which the heart has no concern. However, to take off every unfavourable impression which that hymn may possibly have left upon your mind, I here enclose another, written since that, and addressed to a very different power.

Hymn to Humanity.

I.

Parent of virtue, if thine ear

Attend not now to sorrow's cry;

If

If now the pity-streaming tear
Should haply on thy cheek be dry ;
Indulge my votive strain, O sweet HUMANITY.

II.

Come, ever welcome to my breast !
A tender, but a chearful guest.
Nor always in the gloomy cell
Of life-consuming sorrow dwell ;
For sorrow, long-indulg'd and slow,
Is to Humanity a foe ;
And grief, that makes the heart its prey,
Wears sensibility away.
Then comes, sweet nymph, instead of thee,
The gloomy fiend, stupidity.

III.

O may that fiend be banished far,
Tho' passions hold eternal war !
Nor ever let me cease to know
The pulse that throbs at joy or woe.
Nor let my vacant cheek be dry,
When sorrow fills a brother's eye ;
Nor may the tear that frequent flows
From private or from social woes,
E'er make this pleasing sense depart.
Ye Cares, O harden not my heart !

If

IV.

If the fair star of fortune smile,
 Let not its flattering power beguile.
 Nor, borne along the fav'ring tide,
 My full sails swell with bloating pride.
 Let me from wealth but hope content,
 Remembering still it was but lent;
 To modest merit spread my store,
 Unbar my hospitable door;
 Nor feed, for pomp, an idle train,
 While want unpitied pines in vain.

V.

If heaven, in every purpose wise,
 The envied lot of wealth denies;
 If doom'd to drag life's painful load
 Thro' poverty's uneven road,
 And, for the due bread of the day,
 Destin'd to toil as well as pray;
 To thee, HUMANITY, still true,
 I'll wish the good I cannot do;
 And give the wretch, that passes by,
 A soothing word ——— a tear ——— a sigh.

How

VI.

Howe'er exalted, or deprest,
 Be ever mine the feeling breast.
 From me remove the stagnant mind
 Of languid indolence, reclin'd;
 The soul that one long sabbath keeps,
 And thro' the sun's whole circle sleeps;
 Dull Peace, that dwells in Folly's eye,
 And self-attending Vanity.
 Alike, the foolish, and the vain
 Are strangers to the sense humane.

VII.

O for that sympathetic glow
 Which taught the holy tear to flow,
 When the prophetic eye survey'd
 Sion in future ashes laid!
 Or, rais'd to heaven, implor'd the bread
 That thousands in the desert fed!
 Or, when the heart o'er friendship's grave
 Sigh'd and forgot its power to save—
 O for that sympathetic glow
 Which taught the holy tear to flow!

VIII.

It comes : It fills my labouring breast.
 I feel my beating heart oppress.
 Oh ! hear that lonely widow's wail !
 See her dim eye ! her aspect pale !
 To heaven she turns in deep despair.
 Her infants wonder at her prayer,
 And, mingling tears they know not why,
 Lift up their little hands, and cry.
 O God ! their moving sorrows see !
 Support them, sweet HUMANITY !

IX.

Life, fill'd with grief's distressful train,
 For ever asks the tear humane.
 Behold in yon unconscious grove
 The victims of ill-fated love !
 Heard you that agonizing throe ?
 Sure this is not romantic woe !
 The golden day of joy is o'er ;
 And now they part—to meet no more.
 Assist them, hearts from anguish free !
 Assist them, sweet HUMANITY !

Parent

Parent of virtue, if thine ear
 Attend not now to sorrow's cry;
 If now the pity-freaming tear
 Should haply on thy cheek be dry,
 Indulge my votive strain, O sweet HUMANITY!

LET-

L E T T E R XXVIII.

To the same.

NO more hymns, unless it be one to Hygeia for your recovery, but I am not now in the humour for it; and I really believe that, at this time, I could as soon make a periwig as a poem.

I cannot think with patience of your taking a journey at this season, after such a fit of sickness. Wretch! to be negligent of that health which you have known the want of. But you have always been a giddy creature in this respect. You know the trouble I have frequently had to make you put on a furtout, even when Jupiter threatened

ex omni nimbo demittere Cælo.

Remember then, my good friend, that you are more indebted to providence for your pre-

servation than to your own prudence; but this I know is what you will not forget. Yet remember too, that the same providence, though it may frequently interpose for your safety, has left much to the care of human reason, and expects you should avail yourself of it, while *its rain descends both on the just and on the unjust.*

No wonder you should be surprized to find that, since you last saw me, I have been among the dwellers in *Mesopotamia*, *Pontus* and *Asia*, *Phrygia* and *Pamphilia*; that, like the wandering hero of the *Odyssey*, I have seen many men and many cities, and at the end of my peregrinations have found no living creature that knows me, not even a dog. In reading ***** and ***** , you must take this along with you, that it was written in a few mornings, while I was at a gentleman's house in Kent. It being usual for my friend

to employ that part of the day in reading or study, I left him to his own inclinations, and started this game, in the mean while, for my amusement.

As to the letters, &c. You know they were written sometime ago. I wish sincerely they may be a means of preventing the growth of fanaticism, for religious follies are the worst follies in the world. Pray tell Lady ****, that I received her letter, though this is the first time I have had the grace to acknowledge it.

LETTER XXIX.

To Mr. ———.

FROM scenes where fancy no excursion
tries,

Nor trusts her wing to smoke-invelop'd skies;
Far from the town's detested haunts remov'd,
And nought but thee deserted that I lov'd;
From noise and folly and the world got free,
One truant thought yet only stays for thee.

What is that world which makes the heart its
slave?

A restless sea revolving wave on wave.

There rage the storms of each uncertain clime:
There float the wrecks of fortune and of time:
There hope's smooth gales in soft succession
blow,

While disappointment hides the rock below.
The syren pleasures tune their fatal breath,
And lull you to the long repose of death.

What is that world? at ——— 'tis no more
Than the vext ocean while we walk the shore.

Loud

Loud roar the winds and swell the wild waves
 high,
 Lash the rude beach, and frighten all the sky ;
 No longer shall my little bark be rent,
 Since *Hope* resign'd her anchor to *Content*.

Like some poor fisher that, escap'd with life,
 Will trust no more to elemental strife ;
 But sits in safety on the green-bank side,
 And lives upon the leavings of the tide ;
 Like him contented you your friend shall see,
 As safe, as happy, and as poor as he.

L E T T E R X X X.

To Mr. *****

THE Gazette of this Post presents you
with

A faithful Narrative of the Voyage and Adventures of Mr. Samuel Silver, Bookseller, at Sandwich in Kent; setting forth the Troubles and Dangers he underwent, in an Expedition to print a Visitation Sermon.

On Friday, being the eighteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two, Mr. Samuel Silver, bookfeller of Sandwich, in Kent, went to the parish church of the said town of Sandwich, and did then and there hear a sermon, preached on the visitation of his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, which

which sermon Mr. Silver sat in judgment upon, during the time of its delivery, and pronounced it to be good; only wishing that there had been a few hard Latin words therein; he, Mr. Silver, being convinced that people like to buy what they do not understand.

After the service was over, and after the preacher, as Mr. Silver supposed, was wound up into good humour by virtue of the visitation dinner, our worthy bookseller applied to him for the copy of his discourse, that he might *print it for the benefit of mankind*. To a petition pointed with so powerful a motive, what christian preacher could have any objection? None was made. Mr. Silver, with an aspect that discovered much zeal, I ween, for the service of mankind, received the sermon and bowed.

Having so far succeeded, he returned to his shop, and as he went along, thus reasoned with himself. “ Now, Samuel Silver, hast
 “ thou by thy address procured the sole pro-
 “ perty of printing and vending this sermon :
 “ indeed, thy address has seldom failed, when
 “ exerted upon the greatest occasions, and
 “ great occasion hast thou had to exert it ;
 “ for times are hard, and Mrs. Silver is a
 “ woman of some taste ; and, thank God, of
 “ some family too.—Hold, a lucky thought !
 “ Troth, a good expedient !” (Here Mr. Silver was observed to stop suddenly in the street, and a smack was heard to issue from his thumb and middle finger.) “ Samuel,
 “ thou shalt go to Lambeth to night.——
 “ Thou shalt address his grace of Canterbury
 “ for leave to print this sermon. His grace
 “ is generous, and—who knows ?——who
 “ knows

“ knows but he may give something more
 “ towards printing it than his leave ?”

Thus Samuel reasoned with himself, till
 stumbling against the corner of a ground fo-
 lio, he perceived that he was in his own shop.
 “ Jenny, said he, tell the barber to dress my
 “ best bob in a moment; but first give me
 “ a brush.—Mrs. Silver, I am going to Lam-
 “ beth to night.” “ To Lambeth, Love?”
 “ Yes, Child, I know what I do. Tell Dick
 “ to dust the Bibles and Common-prayer
 “ books, mix about a gallon of ink, and cut
 “ out two or three hundred pens. I shall be
 “ at home to-morrow in the evening.”

Mr. Silver having given his orders, and
 adjusted his best bob by the looking glass, in
 Mrs. Silver's chamber, took an affectionate
 leave of his lady, and went immediately to the
 harbour; where, meeting with a vessel bound
 for

for London, with a fair wind he sailed for that port. But, see the vanity of human hopes! and the inconstancy of human things! Scarce had the vessel proceeded five leagues from Sandwich, when a sudden squall of wind from S. S. E. drove the ship a-head, and presently it blew a violent storm. Mr. Silver, who had been a bookseller from his youth, was a stranger to visitations of this kind. During the tempest he forgot both his address and his fortitude, and though in manifest danger, inconsiderately wished that he had never heard a sermon in his life. All impious thoughts, however, were far from him. In his fright he several times called aloud to the sailors, to know if they had got "*Drops of mercy for despairing sinners,*" or "*the nineteenth edition of the Christian Honeycomb,*" in the ship. The unfeeling crew regarded not his cries; and, because he thought it absolutely necessary, in this danger, to look upon some good book,

book, as a last resource, he took out the sermon that had been the cause of his journey and his peril. The master of the vessel can bear witness to his piety, for he heard him pronounce with a penitential tone of voice, and a somewhat broken accent, the following devout words.

“ * A sermon prea—preach—ed at the
 “ vis—visit-a-ation of his grace the arch-
 “ bi—ishop of Canterbury, at Sa—and-
 “ wick. June the eigh—eigh—eighteenth,
 “ 1762. printed for Sa—amuel Silver.

Probably the last four words administered comfort to him, for he was observed to brighten up a little, immediately after pronouncing them; and with Samuel brightened up the day.

* This remarkable Sermon is sold by Hitch, in Pater-noster-Row.

Whether

Whether Mr. Silyer considered it or not, he had then acquired an apostolic character, since he had been in *perils of waters* for the propagation of christianity, and he might properly have urged that circumstance in his behalf at Lambeth. Be that as it may, it is certain that the storm which terrified our honest bookseller hastened his passage, and though he suffered the pain of a temporary fear, he arrived at London bridge much sooner than he could have expected. From thence he took a pair of oars to Lambeth, and, with hope once more buoyant, proceeded to the palace.

Delusive HOPE ! Thou flattering coquette !
Thou false prophet of FORTUNE ! Why didst
 thou still remain in Pandora's box, when the
 other evils all flew out ? For surely of those
 evils thou wert not the least ! How couldest
 thou delight to tantalize a poor bookseller ?

Woeful is the winding up of poor Samuel's story. His Grace indeed gave him leave to print the sermon; but alas, alas! He gave him nothing more. It should seem he entertained some such strange notion as this, "That a bookseller was not entitled to a premium for printing a pamphlet, from which he expected a profit," and possibly there might be something in that;—but, for all that, I say——poor Samuel!

From Lambeth he betook himself to his brethren in Pater-noster-Row, where he unbosomed his misfortunes, and settled matters about printing his sermon. In what part of the city he took up his lodgings, and whether he kept his word with Mrs. Silver to return to her the day following, are circumstances on which authors are not agreed.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

To the same.

I Do not think it would be worth your while to form any poem on the new *Eloisa*, for though the work has great merit, there is something unnatural in the character of the Heroine. I have no patience with her when she tells her lover that, were she unmarried, and might chuse her husband, she would prefer Mr. Wolmar to him——nay, more wonderful still, if a widow, she would not marry him ! and all this is effected by I know not what sudden fanatical impulse. These are unpardonable sins against sense and nature.

Indeed, to give you my free sentiments ; as to poetry, I think, *satis est potuisse videri*. You would certainly gain a more extensive reputation,

reputation, and do more real service to mankind by your prose writings. Your bold, subdued and elegant style, would adorn any subject that the *Belles Lettres* can afford you; and I should think you would find more entertainment in it, as you found less labour. Poetical and Platonic fancy might be abundantly indulged in the fields of allegory and imagination, at the same time that you were throwing some new and pleasing light on the paths of virtue. Go then, my Plato, my congenial friend and philosopher; explore the progress of truth and science from the groves of Academus to the shades of Britain. — Skilled in the history of mankind, you will be able to shew us the effects of learning on the several states and nations of the world; to trace its light slowly advancing through the regions of barbarism; to describe it now growing dim through the decay of public spirit, and now reviving under the auspices of liberty.

liberty. If you should write dialogues moral and historical, I am persuaded you would succeed. Though you need no pattern of a chaste style, yet it might not be amiss now and then to take up Lord Lyttelton's Dialogues of the Dead. Though many of the subjects are common, yet the noble author has given them an air of novelty, by an elegance of manner which is worthy of imitation.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXII.

From the same.

YOU will not wonder that you receive two letters from me for one, when you know that I have mingled my sighs with your ***** , and that the river ***** has flowed to me.

En alter Thyrsis! nec jam mors occupat illum
Qui Sylvas *Heden* cecinit, primævaque Fata!

I think the moral stanza has been added to the ode since I was at ———. I read it just now by the side of a mæandring rill crowned with primroses, violets, and woodbine, which seemed to offer their sweets to the fair Naiad, and to thank her for the blessing of her fruitful stream. The sweet bird of melancholy too, a stranger to *Westmorland*, soothed me with her long long trill, mimicked your labouring chords, and gave me a concert in the variety

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of

of her music. Yet did not this scene, beautiful and romantic as it is, equal, with me, the banks of our native river, where life was new, and each reflection unembittered.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To Mrs. ****

IT is with unaffected concern I hear the friendship which has so long subsisted between you and Mrs. ***, is now likely to be dissolved. Believe me, when I first received this information I could give it no credit. It is impossible, said I, that the friendship of those ladies should be broken by any thing but death. Hearts so firmly united, so sympathetically allied, can only be torn from each other by violence. But when repeated mention of this affair, and when my own knowledge of the discontinuance of your visits had confirmed the truth of that report, which I most wished to be false, I then concluded that this event must have been produced by some very unfortunate, but very

material cause. That confidence had been betrayed, or that treachery had been intended, that envy had burst the bonds of affection, or that the sure features of malignity had been discovered, I had not the least doubt; but was still uncertain as to the particular cause. It was not long, however, before this suspense was taken off, and I was convinced from undoubted intelligence that the important cause of this affecting quarrel was nothing less than——an AFFRONT! Your sex, indefatigable in enquiries of that kind, at length found out that an *affront* had been given and taken in the warmth of argument: even an *affront*! Glad, indeed, I was that there was no greater cause for this misunderstanding, and yet sorry, believe me, that it was so trivial. Had your quarrel been founded on some dishonourable violation of the laws of friendship, I should have been grieved; as it is, I am ashamed. An affront! The very
term

term is become despicable in any society, but that of coquettes and coxcombs. For what should be an affront to a person of sense? Shall a hasty ebullition of wit be deemed an affront, because it borders on raillery, or seems pointed with ridicule? Surely it merits not to be regarded: at least it may be forgiven, because its end was not to insult, but to be admired. Such sallies of humour are common to people of gay and volatile imaginations, and human vanity is sometimes inclined to indulge them. They are certainly foibles, but I have known them to be the foibles of those who, in other respects, had great merit.

A severe expression thrown out in the unthinking warmth of passion ought, in my opinion, no more to be esteemed an affront than the effusion of sarcastic wit. The end of these kind of expressions is indeed to give pain: But then, consider the state of the

mind upon such occasions. Anger is, properly enough, said to be a short madness; for under its influence the empire of reason is entirely overthrown. We ought therefore to regard the actions and expressions of a person, under such circumstances, in no other light than we would those of a madman. But pride interferes, and unfortunately for us, has frequently the same influence over reason as anger itself.

I beseech you, madam, to let your good sense interpose, and not to sacrifice the valuable blessing of friendship to the madness of a moment. Be not misled by false pride; but be assured that whoever makes the first approaches to a reconciliation, gives the maturest proof of wisdom. Were you the offender, to take the first step towards a re-establishment of friendship would be ingenuous; as you are the offended, it will be generous.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXIV.

To Mr. *****

AS you are a friend to the theatres, I am surprized you never lift up your voice against those formal figures, called *the Three UNITIES*. Do you know their origin? They are the illegitimate off-spring of *taste*, who, about the beginning of the last century, had an assignation with monsieur —, a French comedian. Thus descended, the stage was in some measure their native soil, and there they appeared, almost as soon as they could crawl, in the characters of Macduff's children: But being sent supperless to bed, by the manager, for not looking innocent, from that moment they conceived an utter aversion to Shakespear, and swore that, when they should become of sufficient consequence with

the public, no new work of genius should ever appear upon the stage. This oath they have been extremely attentive to keep sacred, They amused the town with the words *truth* and *nature* and *probability*, till they had appointed such narrow limits to dramatic composition, that *genius* durst never give free scope to his wing, for fear he should soar beyond them. *Imagination* felt herself confined, and ventured not to exert her powers, while she beheld the finger of art limiting the sphere, and describing the circle in which she was to move. Such consequences had the reign of these petty tyrants. And what have we gained by giving up so much? A dull regularity, an insipid consistency. The bold flights of gothic genius are no more, and all is symmetry and exactness and proportion.

But it is to aid the credibility of the plot, it seems, that unity of time, place, and action

is

is observed; and Horace said long ago, *intredulus odi*. What! then, is *intredulus odi* Latin for the Three Unities? Did not the same poetical critic say, I am charmed with the Bard whose magic power *modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis*. What occasion for the scene to lie altogether in one apartment? We must be sensible, if we are awake at all, that the whole representation is a fiction. And why cannot we as well follow the imagination of the poet from region to region? It is still but fiction, and, if it be *spirited* fiction, I am sure it will not be without its effect. It is the same with regard to time. During the music between the acts, cannot we suppose that months have slipped away; particularly if the strain was in *Adagio*, or *Largo*, or *Lento*? And then what noble things may be done? What great events may be brought about by the Bard who is not confined to the narrow limits of three hours?

But

But I have yet more to say against these Unities. I insist upon it that, far from aiding probability, they generally wound it. It is amazing to see what a hubbub of wonderful events are crowded, in every modern play, into the short space of three hours. I remember, in a late comedy, there were two or three courtships projected, begun, carried on, and finished; writings were drawn for which an attorney would have charged ten pounds, as the reward of manual labour; and the whole state and sentiments of a family were as much changed in three hours as they could have been in three years.

Nothing is more observable than that the accuracy of art has always been prejudicial to works of genius, and what they have gained in correctness they have lost in spirit. It is evidently so in music: It is so with poetry in general, and with dramatic poetry in particular.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXV.

To the same.

YOU must not expect the news of the world from hence: Though so near London, we are as much sequestered as you are, in the woods of ***. No couriers pass through this place, except such as are dispatched from the lowland farmers to the salesmen in Smithfield. We know no more about the peace than the compilers of newspapers, or the authors of weekly lucubrations; and the *Aura politica*, the whisper of the day, dies long before it reaches D—.

Of late, however, we have been honoured with the presence of two eminent personages. One of these I take to have been a foreigner; for though he was himself dressed like an Englishman,

lishman, yet the garb of his servant was very particular. He wore a short coat, variegated with shreds and patches of several colours, and his breeches were partly in the form of trousers, descending to the middle of his legs. This fellow always proclaimed the approach of his master by sound of trumpet, upon which summons the whole village assembled to meet him. He was richly apparelled in velvet and gold, and seemed to be of a very benevolent disposition; for he would frequently condescend to talk to the poor inhabitants of this place, and to give them instructions concerning their health. I was much edified by hearing him speak, which I could, even in my chamber, for his voice was loud, and he usually ascended a scaffold; but as he was a foreigner, his language was somewhat hard to be understood. I am told that he makes it his business to go from town to town to preserve the health of mankind; and that, notwithstanding

withstanding the magnificence of his dress, he is so humble, that he will sometimes vouchsafe to pull out the aching tooth of a mantua-maker, or a milk-maid. What an honour to human nature is such benevolence and humility! One thing, however, I could not but behold with indignation. This was the insufferable impertinence of his servant. The domestics of foreigners, I know very well, are admitted to greater liberties than those of our own country; but this rogue in the long breeches was eternally playing tricks with his master, and mimicking him even in his most serious and humane speeches.

The other eminent person, who honoured us with his presence, was no other than the celebrated Mr. Powel. A most wonderful man this! who, I suppose, has formerly existed in some comet, and dropped from its tail, upon too near an approach to the earth.

His

His common food is fire and brimstone, which he licks up with the same avidity as a hungry peasant would a mess of pease-pottage. This he has done before princes, peers, and potentates, to their no small emolument and satisfaction. This *Audax Iapeti genus*, has not only literally *eaten ashes for bread*, but even red hot cinders, and glowing charcoal; nay, such is his passion for this terrible element, that were he to come hungry into your kitchen, and find a Sir-Loin upon the spit, he would eat up the fire, and leave the beef. It is very surprizing that *the friends of true merit*, as he expresses himself in his bill, have not thought of promoting him. We live in an age that is by no means unfavourable to men of genius. Mr. Johnson has been honoured with a royal pension for writing well, and Mr. Sheridan for speaking well; but Mr. Powell, for eating well, is still unrewarded; obliged to wander from place to place; and,

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instead

instead of indulging himself in private with his favourite element, is under the uncomfortable necessity of eating in public, and helping himself from the kitchen fire of some paultry ale-house. *O Tempora! O Mores!*

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

To the same.

THE greatest of all plagues is the plague of common sense. The fool is happy in his ignorance, and the enthusiast in his dream, the lover in his mistress, and the coxcomb in himself; but what is to become of the poor man who has too much discernment to be *deluded* into happiness, and is too wise to enjoy the blessings either of vanity or of folly? Were you, my friend, that person, possibly I might admire you, but I should pity you more.—And yet, by your declaiming against all imaginary pleasures, I suppose you would have me think you such. But of what kind, pray, are these pleasures which you reserve for yourself? Are they not imaginary? —You hunt, fiddle, sing and tell stories; and

and you are pleased with all these amusements.

—But in what does the pleasure consist? Is it in the hound, or the fiddle, or the song, or the tale? Is it not in the ideas you affix to those objects? And, if so—Is it not imaginary? Ask the sober Citizen, whose chief pleasure is, at stated times, to rectify his shop and settle his books, his opinion of your amusements—He will tell you that his own are fifty per cent more rational. Ask a Methodist, or a Quaker—He will call your hunting an unrighteous work, your fiddle a vain piece of wood, your songs the songs of *Belial*, and your stories the workings of the old *Adam*. What is the reason of this, but that your ideas of these things differ from those of the Citizen, the Methodist, and the Quaker? The pleasures, therefore, which they give you are merely ideal, and so are all that we enjoy.—Hence it is that the merry madman is the happiest man alive.

Laugh no more then at me, nor at my imaginary commerce with the muses. You should rather rejoice with me that, when you and the rest of my friends are weary of me, I can have recourse to these airy beings for intellectual delight. We cannot always enjoy the conversation of those we love; There are many hours when the mind must retire into itself, and refer to its own treasures for support. It is necessary therefore, to form mental as well as social connections; and as the first are the least liable to be broken, they are better worth our cultivation than the last.

Think not, however, that I set an inferior value on the intercourse of friendship, nor suppose that I prefer the society of the muses to the company of my friends. If you rallied me on their acquaintance with a view to break it off, I can instruct you how to put your scheme in execution—Let me see you, and I will turn them out of doors.

L. E. T.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the same.

IF I had not received so many interesting proofs of the sincerity of your friendship, I should now begin to doubt it. You will wonder how this should come into my head, and possibly you may laugh at me, when I tell you that my suspicion arises only from the different style of your letters. It is very true, my friend, your letters, which were once so easy and degagée, the careless effusions of the heart, are now, to my great mortification, polished and smoothed off like the modulated periods of the Rambler. You know you have already so much of my affection, that it is scarce possible for you to increase it, and perhaps, therefore, you send me these elegant compositions to add to my

M 2

+ esteem

esteem—well then, you have gained your end. I now know and esteem your elegant talent very highly, and desire that I may have no more proofs of it. Relapse into that un-studied negligence, those natural, friendly, genuine overflowings of the heart, which I have heretofore so much admired in your letters, and which delighted me more than the most finished periods. What have you and I to do with accuracy and elegance, who never intend that our letters shall be printed? Let those write like *Seneca* or *Balsac*,* who like them design to publish their letters, as memorials of their friendship. Be it enough that our friendship last as long as we live; for, believe me, those that come after us will not care whether we loved or hated each other.

* Not only the letters of *Seneca* and *Balsac*, but those of *Cicero*, *Pliny*, *Voiture*, and many others were written for the public eye.

Come then, my friend, let us unbend a
 little, and talk in our old strain—What
 have you been doing this season? are your
 espaliers pruned? are your tulips set? are
 your annuals classed? or have you neglected
 the occupation of Adam for that of Nimrod?
 If you have, what diversion has the field af-
 forded you? have you signalized yourself
 once more at the bridge of H——? or
 does wisdom come with age, according to
 the old Saxon song; and has the goddess of
 Fear preserved you for Mrs. —— and me?
 I assure you I have entertained a very poor
 opinion of the diversion of hunting in Eng-
 land, since I read the history of *Poland*. Had
 you and Tom ——, once been at a
 public hunt in that kingdom, the pityful foxes
 and hares of your own country would be be-
 low your notice. It has been always said
 that hunting is the image of war. In *Poland*
 it is compleatly so. The Polish kings, like

Eastern monarchs, hunt with an army. A circular space is marked out in a forest which they encompass with nets, except one opening that answers to the plain. At a considerable distance a line of dogs, held in leashes, form a crescent; behind which the king, the huntsmen, and the spectators are drawn up in another line. The signal being given, the dogs are let loose into the forest, and drive before them whatever they find. In a short time come out stags, elks, wild bulls, lynxes, boars and bears; and every dog attacks the beast that is its proper prey. This mixed multitude of men, horses, and wild beasts, the noise of horns and the variety of combats is something extremely magnificent. But perhaps I have said too much. This, I know, will furnish you with a topic of conversation for a week, and should it end in a journey to Warsaw, I must never more see the face of Mrs. —.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Mr. ****

WHEN poor *Dryden* turned papist, his pious confessor made him walk ten miles with pease in his shoes, for writing the *Religio Laici*; were I your confessor, I would punish you for not writing at all. You should be obliged to come from W—— to H——, without the assistance of *Crop*, the only horse in the parish you dare mount, and to exclude wheels would be unnecessary; for Sir J——s himself durst not drive down *Cotter*. Your not answering my letter is a crime of the first magnitude, and such as no good man was ever guilty of. Will you pretend business as an excuse? that will not do, unless you can make it appear, that you have more business upon your hands than ever

Cæsar had. *Cæsar* was at the same time a general, an emperor, and an author; and yet you find *that he answered* the ambassadors, even while he was dictating to his secretary. No person of character ever did as you have done. You are a worse friend than any of *Job's three*, who, bad as they were, never failed to answer. Nay, the very inanimate creation reproaches you. Trees, rocks, woods, hills and gin-shops have given answers. Witness *Pope*:

Thou shalt each ale-house, thee each gill-house
mourn,

And answering gin-shops sorer sighs return.

Witness Sir *William Temple*:

We sing not to the deaf;

An answer comes from every trembling leaf.

This fault of yours is become even a proverbial reproach; so that when any thing unpromising

promising or worthless is mentioned, it is a common expression, that such a thing will never answer.

But, to be free with you, I believe there is a certain person under your roof, who by the most wicked insinuations imaginable deprives me of your correspondence, and wholly engrosses your time and attention. I do not suspect Mrs. ———, nor yet Mr. ———, of this unfair dealing. For your wife, I believe you love her too well to be always feeding upon her; and as to your venerable friend, though there is something irresistibly engaging in his Dutch pipes, and the old story of the siege of *Bergen*, both very remarkable for their length, even he cannot always engage you. The pipe must be finished, and *Bergen* must be taken. The person I suspect, is of much greater antiquity than Mr. ———, and his name is *Pliny*.

To own the truth, I have long been jealous of him, but I did not chuse to express my resentment, or to abuse any gentleman of your acquaintance at your own table: But, at this distance, I shall not scruple to say, you are so much taken up with reading his letters, that you will not answer mine. Perhaps you may think his better than mine, and truly there may be something in that, but a living dog is better than a dead lion. Though *Pliny* may have some title to your esteem, yet surely your friends have a greater. Would *Pliny* ever have lent you his shoulder in your first attempts to walk, after the gout, as I have done? would ——— But why do I talk to a man that will not answer?

To

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

To Mr. *****.

I Am not at all surprized, to hear you express so much pleasure at the successful growth of C—— Wood. It was your own hand that planted it, and nature to induce us to useful labours has wisely annexed a peculiar pleasure to our success: So when *Cyrus* shewed his magnificent palace and gardens to *Salon*, he desired him to attend more particularly to a stately grove, which bounded one part of the prospect. That grove, said the prince, gives me more delight than all the other ornaments of my situation, because I reared it myself. With the same kind of complacency and satisfaction I have frequently heard my friend Mr. *****, whom you have heard me mention on account of his taste for

rural

rural exercises and improvements, speak of a fine tall grove behind his house; which he had planted in the early part of his life. That grove my memory refers to with particular pleasure, because it has sometimes been the resort of friendship and the muses. But the delight with which you look upon those flourishing trees does not, I suppose, altogether arise from your having planted them yourself. They form a kind of epoch in your life, and when you look back to their plantation, you think of many scenes of early enjoyment, the remembrance of which may still be pleasing. They may also have a moral use, and by marking the progress of time, remind you that you have advanced so much farther on the race of life. This is a truth we are very inclinable to overlook; for death, like an expiring lamp, seems always to recede as we approach.

But

But

But how far off, or how near the period of life may be, can be of little consequence to you, who have long since discharged its duties, and have now only to enjoy the remaining hours in hope and quiet. For this, retirement is, no doubt, the proper scene, where

Life may sleep, and learn to love her end;

where the mind may, at leisure, withdraw into itself, and the interests of immortality become its principal object; and where, by accustoming itself to abstracted speculation, it may, if I may so say, learn the art of existing when the body is no longer any part of its care. Agreeable to these sentiments are the following beautiful verses which I remember, though I know not where I first met with them.

O felix Studii, qui non ingloria ruris

Oria tutus agit; procul ambitione metuque

LET

Qui

Qui recolens quicquid dignum est sapientis bo-

noque, ————— eterna meditatur seria vita,

Gaudia despiciens moritura —————

Had Mr. Cowley known of these verses, he

would have inserted them in his Essay on Re-

tirement, and probably would have translated

them thus :

Happy the man who far from Fear's alarm,

Quietly lives on his own little farm ;

Who thinks and acts in all things as he shou'd,

And studies only to be wise and good ;

Whose thoughts mount upward to their native

skies,

And scorn the bliss, that only smiles and dies.

You see I have not forgot my promise, nor

your constant demand of verses, any more

than that I am, &c.

LETTER XL

To the same.

YOU could not have greater pleasure in the vigorous vegetation of your favourite grove, than I have had in the successful growth of a laurel, which I have for sometime watered, cultivated and pruned: I mean the poetical genius of a young gentleman of Oxford, which I took some pains to polish; and I have lately received the most flattering proofs of my success, in an Elegy which he wrote on the death of a friend, and fellow collegian. As you are always pleased with the efforts of growing genius, you will not be dissatisfied with the following stanzas taken from the elegy I speak of.

— Death with brow severe,
 Drest to the moving eloquence of woe,

Gloomily

Gloomily glad beholds a mother's tear,
And strikes with surer aim the ruthless blow.

Oh! had that hand withheld its hostile rage
From the dear object of a parent's prayer,
His filial love had cheer'd her widow'd age,
And broke the speeding darts of Time and
Care!

Where now are fled those scenes of social ease,
By fancy form'd, remote from vulgar strife
Of smiling love, and calm domestic peace,
That scatter sunshine on the stream of life?

I Where are the joys by flattering hope supplied,
Dear, distant dreams of yet unknown delight;
When health flow'd vigorous in the purple tide,
And fancy painted every prospect bright?

O Death! last limit of our vain desires!
What awful truths thy silent scenes display!
By thy pale lamp the star of hope expires,
And fancy closes her mechanic day.

I felt more sensibly this pleasure, as I had
myself the happiness of communicating some
satis-

satisfaction of the same kind to a worthy clergyman, whom I call my poetical father. He is now situated at *Askrig*, a little town among the northern mountains of Yorkshire. You pity him, but he is not pitiable, for he has too much sense and virtue to be uneasy, under any circumstances. I often think that Nature and Fortune, like the sun and the north wind in the fable, seem to have made him the object of their contention; only with this difference, that nature seems inclined to do him all the good, offices in her power, and Fortune all the bad ones. Fortune has deprived him of a leg, but Nature produces a number of strait trees on purpose to supply him with a crutch. Fortune has excluded him from all the offices of honour, affluence and power, but nature has given him a chearful, and *an easy breast*, (his own expression) so that he laughs or looks indifferently at all the game that Fortune plays. Last summer

I paid him a visit. At the inn, where I called to put up my horses, he was accidentally drinking an evening glass with a neighbour. The waiter officiously went into the parlour where he was, and desired that he would be content with another room, for that a gentleman and his servant were come to stay all night. My good master seized his crutch, and in a hurry was stepping away; but in the passage he came into my arms, and shed tears of joy that he had found a friend in the wilderness.

You are now so much pleased with the man, that I may venture to send you a few stanzas which I addressed to him some time ago, though they were inspired by no other muse than Gratitude.

LAMB, could the muse that boasts thy forming
care

Unfold the grateful feelings of my heart,
Her hand for thee should many a wreath prepare,
And cull the choicest flowers with studious art.

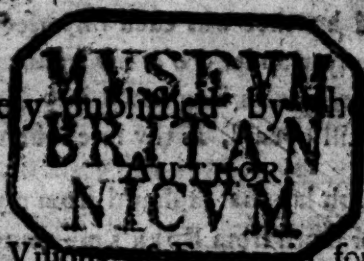
For mark'd by thee was each imperfect ray
 That haply wander'd o'er my infant mind;
 The dawn of genius brighten'd into day,
 As thy skill open'd, as thy lore refin'd.

Each uncouth lay that falter'd from my tongue
 At eve or morn from EDEN'S murmurs came;
 Whate'er I painted, and whate'er I sung,
 Though rude the strain, though artless was
 the draught,

You wisely prais'd, and fed the sacred fire,
 That warms the breast with love of honest
 fame;
 You swell'd to nobler heights my infant lyre,
 Rais'd the low thought, and check'd th' ex-
 uberant flame.

" O, could the muse in future times obtain
 " One humble garland from th' *Aonian* tree!
 " With joy I'd bind thy favour'd brows again,
 " With joy I'd form a fairer wreath for thee."

THE END of the FIRST VOLUME.



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